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CONVICTED FELON

Lantigua Chief of Staff Lenny Degnan (r) Convicted for Bribery



Patrick Blanchette and Lenny Degnan testify at The Statehouse asking for a \$35M bailout loan for Willie Lantigua in 2010.

PHOTO: TOM DUGGAN

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VALLEY PATRIOT OF THE MONTH

AMESBURY POLICE OFFICER AND NATIONAL GUARDSMAN JASON KOOKEN

JUSTESS JACOBSON
GRANDDAUGHTER OF OFFICER DUGGAN

Last month *The Valley Patriot* awarded Amesbury Police Officer Jason Kooken with *The Valley Patriot, Officer Tom Duggan Sr. Law Enforcement Award*. Officer Duggan's granddaughter did the presentation to Officer Kooken.

Every year, Jason Kooken bicycle rides his way down to Washington, DC to the National Law Enforcement Memorial to raise money for children of police officers who have been killed in the line of duty.

Jason's work ethic and morals show that my grandfather, Officer Tom Duggan, still lives in him everyday.

In 2010, when my father, Tom Duggan, Jr. read the names of Massachusetts police officers who were killed in the line of duty at the Police Memorial in front of

President Obama's Cabinet and 25,000 law enforcement officers from all over the country ... Officer Jason Kooken was there and wearing a bracelet bearing the name of Lawrence Police Officer Tom Duggan, Sr on his wrist because he had just biked from New England to Washington DC in my grandfather's name as he had done previous years.

When the ceremony was over, Jason and my dad met by chance at the memorial wall where my grandfather's name is etched in stone forever.

As Officer Kooken was touching the name of Tom Duggan Sr., on Panel 36W of the National Police Memorial he and my dad stood side by side in awe not having ever met.

As they both stood there silently remembering the tragedy that lead to the murder

KOOKEN: PAGE: 11



PHOTO: R.MUSHOW PHOTOGRAPHY

Winners of the 2014 Valley Patriot Officer Tom Duggan Law Enforcement Award: Lawrence Firefighter Juan "Manny" Gonzalez (center) and Amesbury Police Officer Jason Kooken (2nd from right). Far Left: Groveland Selectman Joe D'Amore, Far Right Valley Patriot Publisher Tom Duggan, Jr.

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Obama vs Putin: Clueless Buffoon vs. Savvy Street-Fighter

Charles Ormsby
THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX

We all know the discomfort we feel when we watch someone put his incompetence on public display for all to see. And so it is as we watch the terrible events in Ukraine evolve. Putin just keeps slapping Obama upside the head and then openly ridiculing him. Kerry's solemn pronouncements, as if he had a clue, just add to the pathetic performance of the Obama administration.

I just can't watch it anymore, both because it represents national humiliation and because of the gravity of the stakes involved.

Putin is doing what power hungry nationalists have done since the time of Cyrus the Great of Persia ... they sniff out weakness and lack of resolve and then they move to exploit them. The Iranian Mullahs and Chinese autocrats are marching in stride.

We are not in a magical new era of civilized human behavior. The nature of man has not changed. If a city dissolves its police force, gangs of thugs will take over.

The world stage is no different except that the thugs are more sophisticated and have substantially greater resources. But even more important is the degree of destruction we risk. A worldwide conflagration is not out of the question.

Less than one percent of Americans alive today directly experienced the destruction of World War II. Our psyche has been forged by luxury. We have returned to the innocence of the America that preceded World War I and II.

It has taken just two decades since the supposed end of the Cold War to become oblivious to the threats posed by authoritarian dictators. Obama personifies our blindness and is leading the world along a path to destruction.

If Obama had a spine and understood or appreciated American values, what might he do to recover our standing in the World and restore our security in the face of current world threats? The easy answer is to reverse practically every foreign policy he has promulgated. But let me be more specific.

Here is my eight-point plan:

First, publicly acknowledge the threat posed by the world's primary autocratic threats: Russia, Iran, North Korea and China.

Second, make it abundantly clear that the U.S. will defend its interests, including honoring its alliances.

Third, immediately begin rebuilding our military deterrent, strategic and tactical, and insist that our buildup be mirrored by our allies ... the free ride enjoyed by our al-

Excerpt from Alexandr Solzhenitsyn's 1970 Lecture
Accepting the Nobel Prize in Literature.

"The spirit of Munich has by no means retreated into the past; it was not merely a brief episode. The timid civilized world has found nothing with which to oppose the onslaught of a sudden revival the barefaced barbarity, other than concessions and smiles. The spirit of Munich is a sickness of the will of successful people, it is the daily condition of those who have given themselves up to the thirst after prosperity at any price, to material well-being as the chief goal of earthly existence. Such people – and there are many in today's world – elect passivity and retreat, just so as their accustomed life might drag on a bit longer, just so as not to step over the threshold of hardship today – and tomorrow, you'll see, it will all be alright. (But it will never be all right! The price of cowardice will only be evil; we shall reap courage and victory only when we dare to make sacrifices.)"

lies is over. Cancel the planned cuts in our defense budget and replace it with a 10-15 percent increase. Slash welfare state and government employment to compensate.

Fourth, invite what remains of the Ukraine into NATO and position U.S. and NATO military assets to send a real message to Putin regarding future military adventures.

Fifth, end the charade of nuclear talks with Iran and issue an ultimatum regarding the dismantling of their nuclear enrichment program. Destruction of Iran's nuclear facilities and any supporting military assets should follow if the ultimatum is ignored.

Sixth, develop a longer term strategy for eliminating the dictatorships in Cuba, North Korea, Syria, and Venezuela.

Seventh, rebuild our economy by returning to an honest, free-market system, including the rapid elimination of the stultifying regulatory/welfare state with urgent attention to eliminating the barriers to energy development.

Eighth, use the rapid growth of America's energy sector to eliminate the blackmail practiced by Putin and the Arabs.

If we don't adopt a plan substantially consistent with this philosophy, we will continue to face a very dangerous world and the probable end of our comfortable existence.

My eight-point program is designed to substantially reduce the threats America faces from expansionist autocrats like Putin. Key portions of this plan focus on increasing the credibility of the free world's military forces so that aggression can be deterred. Remember, the number one reason to have a strong military is to avoid the horrors of war, not to engage in them.

A key part of the suggested plan focuses on revitalizing our free market economy. Despite the current malaise caused by the Marxist policies pursued by the Obama administration, I am convinced America has a

pent up appetite and capacity for amazingly rapid growth. It merely needs a clear signal that private property, and that includes profits, will be respected and legally protected.


Developing our energy resources is a critical element of the plan so that neither we nor our allies can be blackmailed by Putin. Currently, Europe is heavily dependent on Russia for both oil and natural gas. Russia has the upper hand now, thanks to the short-sighted policies of Obama and his European counterparts, but it needn't remain that way.

Technology breakthroughs in the U.S. and Canada give us an opportunity to checkmate Russia's energy blackmail strategy. We should make it an emergency national priority to expand North American energy production on all fronts: Oil, natural gas and coal ... including construction of LNG facilities for exporting natural gas.

The very declaration of such a national commitment will give Putin pause and Europe hope for relief. If we fail to do so, Europe will wilt under Russian threats and we will face an increasingly dangerous world ... alone.

Unfortunately, nearly three more years of an America-hating, empty suit in the White House may be just what Putin needs to cement his victory and our demise.

January 21, 2017 cannot come soon enough for the safety of the free world.

 Dr. Charles Ormsby served two terms on the North Andover School Committee, co-founded of the North Andover Taxpayers Association, is a co-founder of and columnist for The Valley Patriot, broadcasts weekly opinion pieces for WCAP (980 AM) in Lowell, and is a faculty member in the Department of Mathematical Sciences at the University of Massachusetts Lowell. Dr. Ormsby is a graduate of Cornell and has a doctorate degree from MIT. You can email him at ccormsby@verizon.net



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With Lenny Degnan Convicted We Urge More Indictments

For years we have called for investigations into what State Rep. Jim Lyons called the “criminal enterprise” of the Lantigua Administration in Lawrence. For years we have detailed in this newspaper the myriad of questionable and sometimes blatant criminal actions of those on the taxpayers dime at Lawrence City Hall.

Now, Lantigua’s Chief of Staff, Lenny Degnan has been convicted on bribery, conspiracy, and corruption charges in connection with the trash trucks that were illegally “gifted” to the Dominican Republic.

When prosecutors made closing statements, they told the jury that the criminal trial was about Lenny Degnan, not Willie Lantigua or DPW Director Frank McCann, “this is not their time,” he told them.

We believe their time has come.

Anyone who was involved in this and other conspiracies in Lawrence ought to

be indicted and brought to justice (unless they have cooperated with law enforcement for a plea). Especially considering:

- * The Patriot Ambulance contract that was renewed early after two ambulances were sent to the Dominican Republic (filled with medical equipment).

- * The cars that Lawrence Police confiscated from drug dealers but ended up in the Dominican instead of being auctioned off as public property as required by state law. Deputy Police Chief Melix Bonilla has been charged with that crime, but Lantigua, Degnan and others have not.

- * The public firing and humiliations of dozens of city workers whose only crime was being hired under a previous mayor.

- * The hiring of unqualified and unethical people to be in charge of the taxpayer’s money and Lawrence’s delivery of public services.

- * Cash from city parking garages be-

ing deposited into Lantigua’s campaign account after Lantigua ordered that only cash was to be accepted by the city’s parking garages and lots.

- * Layoffs and demotions of police and firefighters after receiving the \$35 million bailout loan.

- * A worker’s compensation award for Frank McCann’s wife while the attorney opposing her case for the city had several side relationships with McCann.

- * Lantigua and Attorney Charlie Boddy concealing public records on how much money was paid to Attorney’s Carmine and William DiAdamo who, ironically enough are also the landlords to the School Dept. and filed a lawsuit against the City of Lawrence.

We believe jail is the appropriate place for former Chief of Staff Lenny Degnan.

When Degnan had power he bullied people, threatened their jobs, threatened

their families jobs, and took great glee out of getting even with anyone who said ‘no’ to him for any reason. He was a bully. And he is where bullies belong, behind bars.

But, while Degnan was the enforcer of the Lantigua criminal enterprise, many others planned, plotted, and executed dozens of schemes over four years and they belong sitting in a cell right next to their former colleague.

If we are ever to have our faith restored in the city government of Lawrence, those who abused their power for personal or political gain must be held accountable. Those coerced to participate or were wrongly accused must be exonerated.

But none of that can happen without more investigations and more indictments.

We call on prosecutors and law enforcement to continue to investigate and bring these people to justice.

This Time it Really is for the Children

Jeff Katz

VOTED AP’s BEST RADIO TALK SHOW HOST
VALLEY PATRIOT EDITOR’S CHOICE AWARD

According to a recent poll, more than seventy percent of us believe that that DCF is broken. I’m assuming that the other thirty percent work for DCF.

Politicians routinely hoot and holler that something is “for the children.” They usually invoke that phrase when there is a piece of legislation written to benefit one of their favorite special interest concerns through the use of your hard earned tax dollars. In the case of fixing DCF, the good guys can employ the “for the children” call to action and actually find themselves telling the truth.

It is a sad commentary that over the past few weeks, DCF Commissioner Olga Roche’s most insightful and hopeful comment occurred when she was summoned to address a collection of her economic benefactors on Bacon Hill. You’ll recall that she puffed out her chest and proudly proclaimed that her agency had not “lost” any more children...well, at least since the last child they lost. Surely you remember little Jeremiah Oliver who was “lost” by DCF staff who did not bother to check on him and their supervisors who did not bother to check on those who did not bother to check on him.

Unlicensed staff. Uncaring attitude. Potential foster parents with big time

criminal records. A regular cavalcade of high fives for DCF when you think about it. I’m sure that the question being debated behind the closed doors of the Corner Office is when to start the nationwide search for a new DCF commissioner. Oh, and probably a discussion about where on the payroll to place the old one, too.

Let’s be brutally honest for a second. Kids don’t wind up in the DCF system for any nice reasons. These are kids who have parents who have abandoned them or abused them. These children go hungry because their parents can’t be bothered feeding them. In other words, these kids are already getting a raw deal. This should be the place where people of every political stripe could come together and declare that somebody has to take care of these children.

I see statistics from around the nation showing that other agencies are also “losing” many of the children in their care. I see political leaders jumping in front of the microphones and cameras long enough to pontificate on this before they conveniently duck behind the curtain again having done nothing.

I implore them to do fix this problem. This time, it really, honestly is for the children.

Follow Jeff Katz on facebook at www.facebook.com/radiokatz and on twitter at jeffkatzshow



Jeff Katz is a former police officer, former talk show host on Talk1200AM and won the Associated Press Award for Best Talk Show In Boston two years in a row. He is now an exclusive columnist for The Valley Patriot. WEBSITE: visionaccomplished.net

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Frank Serrano, and Mr. Sid rejoin Frank's new Barber Shop in North Andover (Next to Bank of America). Frank worked at Mal's Barber Shop for the past 15 years and Mr. Sid has been at the Andover Barber Shop for the past 7 years.

Frank and Mr. Sid worked together 50 years ago at the Salisbury Barber Shop where they cut the hair of some of the biggest stars of the day who (for those of you who remember) were appearing at the Salisbury Frolics.

And now, here they are, back together again! A lot older, a lot wiser and a lot better barbers!!

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Spring Crafts in Andover

Anne Knowles
ANDOVER COLUMNIST

Looking forward to spring and summer? Keep May 10, 2014 as a great day to see an example of enjoyable “things to do” in our area. In Andover, we can begin with “Crafts in the Park” set for May 10, 2014, rain or shine. Although this program has been held for several years, it is always attracting vendors, who love what they do, and want to share it with everyone.

This craft fair is supported by Christ Church of Andover, and proceeds from this remarkable craft fair is used to support many community groups: Habitat for Humanity, Esperanza Academy, Bread and Roses, Neighbors in Need, Lazarus House, Merrimack Valley Project, the Christ Church Children’s Center preschool program, and the Andover Thrift Shop.

A special bonus is that the vendors, who are scheduled to be at this craft fair, can

be found on the website craftsinthepark.com. A site map on the location, the park next to Town Hall, and parking, as well as a layout of the display booths can also be found. However, what I found most interesting is the number of vendors and the variety of goods. When you look at the website and click on the 2014 vendors, you will find that many of the crafters have their own websites.

It is a wonderful way to see their website and information about their interest in their craft. Looking at their website gives you an insight into the motives that made them see and express their love for the craft they offer to the public. Only amateur and professionals are invited to show their crafts. There will be no commercial vendors.

Keep the date, May 10, 2014 in mind and treat yourself to a unique and pleasant day, rain or shine.

Stewart Tops Ticket, Incumbents Re-elected

Tom Duggan
VALLEY PATRIOT PUBLISHER

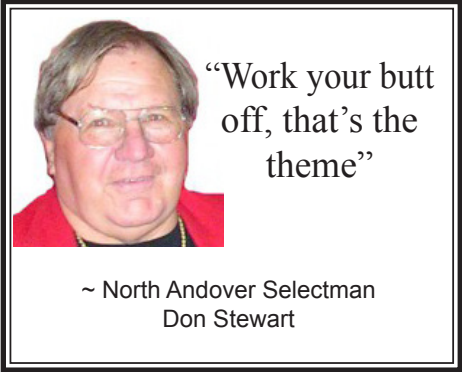
Long time North Andover Selectman Don Stewart topped the ticket in Tuesday’s race to fill two seats on the Board of Selectmen. Stewart placed first with 846 votes, while incumbent Selectman Tracey Watson placed second with 794 votes, leaving the newcomer Adam Sapienza the odd man out with only 520 votes.

Stewart told The Valley Patriot after the results were announced at North Andover High School that he was “very disappointed” at the extremely low voter turnout.

“It was very low, very disappointing,” Stewart said.

Asked what he thought lead to him topping today’s election, Stewart laughed.

“Just by being myself. I think they



finally realized after all these years what I’m really all about. It’s a lot of trust by a lot of people. Whenever I say something I back it up, I know what I’m talking about and I mean what I say. People have confidence in me and my abilities.”

Stewart said that he is glad he is going to be around another three years to see through some of the projects that are

STEWART: PAGE: 23

Faces of Andover

Anne Knowles
ANDOVER COLUMNIST

Andover Historical Society is presenting “Faces of Andover”, a photographic exhibit of residents, who lived here before, after and during the Civil War, in observation of the 150th anniversary of the Battle of Spotsylvania. The event will begin at the Historical Society, 97 Main Street, Andover Center on April 11, 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. Visitors may also view the exhibit Tuesday through Saturday from 10:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m.

This battle was one of the most deadly battles of the Civil War. Seven men from Andover were killed, when General Ulysses S. Grant and General Robert E. Lee, faced each other at the historic courthouse at Spotsylvania, Virginia.

The battle raged from May 8-21, 1864. Some historians call this the “bloodiest battle” of the war: 18,000 Union casualties and 12,000 Confederate.

Andover had many residents who were in sympathy to the Union cause. At the war’s end, in 1865, 600 men and boys from this town had served in the

Civil War. The aftermath of the war was devastating to the citizens of Andover and so in 1873, the Memorial Public Library was built, with citizen donations, to honor the 53 men who died in the war.

Phillips Andover will also present programs for the observation of “Lest we Forget.”

On Sunday, April 13, 2014 at 2pm, a documentary film “Death and the American Civil War” will be shown at the Kemper Auditorium, 5 Chapel Avenue, Andover.

A lecture by Dr. Drew Gilpin Faust on her book, Death and the American Civil War, will begin at 7pm at the Cochran Chapel, 2 Chapel Avenue, Andover. Dr. Faust is president of Harvard University and historian. Civil War filmmaker, Ric Burns, will also be in attendance to discuss his film of Dr. Faust book. Both programs are open free to the public.

For more information on the program events during this summer, visit the Andover Historical Society website.

Economic Growth:
A Matter of Choice, Not Chance

OSCAR CAMARGO
GUEST CONTRIBUTOR

Since announcing my candidacy for state representative, I’ve gone door-to-door all throughout the district meeting voters whose concerns have primarily focused on one issue: the economy. It’s not difficult to understand why, and I bet you know why as well. The economy is recovering but it’s not growing. We have qualified, capable people looking for ways to earn a living, but who cannot. Small businesses are being pushed to the brink while larger firms move away from the area.

I’m not one to dwell on the past though

it’s important to understand how we got on our present course. I like to focus on the future and what I can do to be proactive. That’s why I support the Osgood Corridor Redevelopment Plan that’s been in the works for years. It is the largest economic potential we have in the Valley.

Let me explain if you’re wondering what this plan entails. The area in question lies at the site of the former Lucent Technologies building. The plan would convert a two-mile stretch along Route 125 that connects North Andover to Haverhill into residential and commercial areas. The Haverhill commuter rail line sits next to the site and upon completion

CAMARGO: PAGE: 23

NORTH ANDOVER

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Activities, Announcements North Andover Senior Center

The programs at the Senior Center are designed to provide the older adult with opportunities to strengthen their self-esteem and extend their ability to live productively and independently within the community. Come on by and become a member of the Senior Center. You just might make a new friend.

Volunteers are the backbone of the North Andover Senior Center, we currently need Medical Transport Volunteers. You can set your own hours. Call the Senior Center for more information. Speak with our Program Coordinator at 688-9560 for application and assistance.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

LECTURE SERIES: Monday @10 a.m., April 8, Fire Chief Andrew Melnikas

MONTHLY MYSTERY RIDE: Thursday April 10th @ 9 a.m. Visit a local senior center for lunch and take in a local venue. Transportation and lunch \$5

APRIL SUPPER CLUB: APRIL 16TH: (Sign up in person begins April 2nd, first Wednesday of the month.) “The Colonial Inn”, Concord, MA. Bus \$3, departs senior center @ 4:30. One check per

table/menu may be limited. Reservation at 6pm.

NEWS & VIEWS: Every Wednesday at 10–11:30. Come and join in the lively discussion of current events, politics, history and you never know what else.

S.H.I.N.E. Volunteers: (Serving Health Insurance Needs of Elders), April 15th. Free, confidential counseling on all aspects of health insurance to North Andover residents on Medicare; Call center for an appointment. First Tuesday of the month 10-1pm, third Tuesday of the month 12-3pm.

MEET WITH AN ATTORNEY: Att. Ramsey Bahrawy April 15th, 11:30-1. Schedule with Reception-first consult is free.

MR. FIX IT: April 7th and April 28th instead of April 21 (due to Patriot’s Day Holiday). 12-3pm. We repair almost as good as new. Lamps, with cords and sockets, replace watch batteries, small tables and chairs. Anything that is not listed, we will give it a shot! Your cost is \$2 - \$4 depending on work needed, plus parts. Proceeds benefit the Senior Center.

WALK IN CLINIC: Every Wednesday

9-12 p.m. the North Andover Senior Center and Home Health Inc/VNA operate a wellness clinic. If you are a North Andover Senior, we urge you to take advantage of this opportunity to check your blood pressure, blood sugar, weight and blood oxygen levels. Consult privately with an RN regarding any medication and health issues that you are concerned about. There is no charge for this service. Donations are gratefully accepted.

FOOT CARE: RN Catherine Languedoc, Foot Care Specialist, will be available on the third Friday of every month from 9-2:30. Next date is April 18th. Dr. Connolly is available on the second Wednesday of the month next date is April 9th 1-4 pm. Please call ahead to schedule an appointment.

HEARING CLINIC: April 16th Miracle-Ear will be at the North Andover Senior Center (3rd Wed. of every month), 10-12. Sign up with reception for a free screening.

ROCKINGHAM MALL TRIP- 4th Monday of every month. Next date April 28th @ 1 p.m. \$4.00 round trip.

ZUMBA WITH TALLIE!

Zumba Girl TALLIE!

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TOM DUGGAN'S NOTEBOOK

JAJUGA ~ MARLEY 2016
Former State Senator and current Methuen City Councilor James Jajuga is always looking to run for something and since he is obsessed with providing drugs, drug paraphernalia and supports other legislation to make it easier for drug users to do their thing, State Rep. Linda Campbell decided to have a little fun on Saint Patrick's Day at Jajuga's expense. Campbell has come up with the perfect 2016 Presidential ticket of Jajuga and Bob Marley... if only she was kidding..

SOUTH LAWRENCE EAST LITTLE LEAGUE

The South Lawrence East Little League is looking for help building a concession stand so that they can help pay for registration fees and equipment for kids who cannot afford to play. Each year the SLE refuses to turn away any child who wants to play baseball simply because they cannot afford it. While most communities pay get 10-15% of their revenue from concessions SLE doesn't have one.

Last year two out of every four kids cannot afford the registration fees. While the SLE summer program allows all kids to play free of charge the spring league does not have enough money to do that in SLE Spring baseball.

To help by donating money, materials or labor email: southlawrenceeastlittleleague@gmail.com

CAMPBELL V. DINUCCIO - Last month we ran a story on line from an interview of State Rep. candidate al DiNuccio on Methuen where he accused State Rep. Linda Dean Campbell sponsored the transgendered bathroom bill in the legislature. Our research shows that this is not the case. Campbell did not sponsor nor did she vote for the transgender bathroom bill. We will be covering this race extensively beginning next month.

ANTI FREE SPEECH SELECTMEN DEFEATED IN BILLERICA

When it comes to protecting free speech I have always believed the most important battles happen at the local level. Last month we got word through one of our readers, Christina MacDonald of Billerica, that two selectmen up for reelection had proposed restrictions on campaign signs at election time. With only a few days to react I put out a call on Facebook for our loyal readers to send emails, post messages and make calls to friends of theirs in Billerica to spread the word. On election day, Billerica Selectman David Gagliardi and Robert Accomando were defeated by two pro 1st Amendment candidates Piscitelli and Burns. THANK YOU to everyone in The Valley Patriot network who made phone calls and sent emails today in our victory for free speech. For those interested the vote totals were Pisitelli 3,158, Burns 2,856, Accomando 1,711, Gagliardi 1,646, and Capobianco 570. If there is a councilor or selectman in your town that favors restriction on free speech, regulating political signs, or somehow trying to stifle the 1st amendment please let us know.

LOWELL HUMANE SOCIETY is excited to announce it's 6th Annual Steps For Pets fundraiser! This years event will be held on Sunday, May 4th 11am-2pm at Middlesex County 4H Fairgrounds in Westford, MA. The event will feature pet related vendors, adoptable pets from various cat dog and rabbit rescues, crafters, photo booths, agility demonstrations, a Kids Zone with bouncy house, face painters, Fanciest Dressed Dog and Best Canine Kisser contests and more! Learn more about adoptable pets, this event and how you can help raise funds for homeless pets at www.lowell-



Outgoing Exalted Ruler of the Lawrence Elk's Lodge #65, Richard Kenney, Lawrence Mayor and Iraqi War Vet. Daniel Rivera, Massachusetts House of Representatives from the 17th Essex District, Frank A. Moran, Current Exalted Ruler of the Lawrence Elk's #65, Michael Burkhart, Lawrence Elk's #65 Sales Manager, Franklin Perez.

humanesociety.org.
TAX DAY RALLY IN BOSTON Sunday, April 13, 1 to 4 pm – Yes once again I have been asked to be the emcee of the "Tax Day Rally" at the Parkman Bandstand on the Boston Common. The event is sponsored by the Greater Boston Tea Party. Hear some great speakers and mingle with Tea Party people from across the state. If you would like to assist in making this a successful event, you can contribute via www.geticontribute.com/gbtp. Those who have only heard in the media what the Tea Party is all about, come see for yourself.

2014 GO RED FOR WOMEN® CASTING CALL MAY 9th - Share Your Story for the Chance to Represent Go Red For Women Locally! Join the American Heart Association at this year's Go Red For Women® Casting Call on Friday, May 9th at the AHA's Waltham Office, located at 300 5th Avenue, Suite 6, Waltham, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Too many women die each year because they are unaware that heart disease is their No. 1 killer. Go Red For Women® is looking for women to share their heart stories and the choices they make to live a heart-healthy lifestyle, empowering others by example. Whether you are a survivor, have made a significant lifestyle change, or have another personal connection to heart disease, we encourage you to come and share your story. Women who share their stories have the chance to become a local spokesperson for the cause – representing Go Red For Women® in marketing materials, at events, online and in the media. Visit heart.org/MACastingCall to learn more and to register for this event.

LAWRENCE CHESS CLUB will meet on Wednesday, April 16th, from 6:30-8pm at the Lawrence Public Library at the corner of Haverhill & Lawrence streets. This is always a FREE event, held the third Wednesday each month. Please bring a friend and a chess set. ALL ages and abilities welcome. Play, learn and help teach. They can teach anyone to play in about 20 minutes, but it requires a lifetime to master. English is not required.

MIDDLETON'S GODDARD SCHOOL from our friends at the Grassroots Newswire - The old house had been vacant for several years

and was condemned for its condition when the property was purchased for the construction of a new preschool. The old rabbit and homing pigeon barn was partially collapsed and dangerous and it looked as if the house would soon follow suit. When the demolition crews hired by Zeraschi and Son, the general contractor and purchaser of the property at 244 Maple street, started pulling apart the house, however they discovered some treasures inside: dozens of trophies from breeders contests, an antique door ringer, and more. Zeraschi, knowing the history of the Scott family, brought the artifacts to the Middleton historical society at the Flint Library.

Fast forward about six months to find the newly opened Goddard School standing high on the property behind where the old house once was. The school had only been open a few weeks when a post appeared on their Facebook page. The post, written by a descendent of the family, described the happiness shared in the old homestead and stated "I cannot tell you how

happy my Nona would be to know that there will be the laughter of children on the property once more."

Kris Girrell, the owner of the new school, was moved. "I felt compelled to contact her not just to thank her, but to find out more about the story." Through several email exchanges between Girrell and Shyre Lancia, granddaughter of Minetta (Nona) Scott, the school owners found out some of the heritage of the family, the Scott barns at the Topsfield fair, and even a fair warning that the school might be visited in the spring by some homing pigeons!

"It was such a warming family story that we wanted to capture some of it for our teachers and students," added Girrell. "It seemed fitting to name our teacher's resource room after this wonderful grandmother who was the source of learning for her family." Aptly the room now bears the inscription "The Minetta Room" with a brief paragraph about this little corner of Middleton heritage.

SENATOR IVES OFFICE HOURS in North Andover on Friday, April 18th between 1 and 2PM. Office hours will be held at the North Andover Senior Center, Activity Room. Appointments are not required. For any questions,

please contact her office at (617) 722-1604 or by emailing Christopher.Power@masenate.gov

MASS OPEN MEETING AND OPEN RECORDS LAWS - Chairman of the Andover Board of Selectmen, Alex Vispoli, candidate for State Senate, called for ending the legislative exemption from the Open Meeting and the Open Records law.

"On the board of Selectmen we have to abide by these laws that provide transparency to the people. It is time to end the legislative exemption. Far too much happens behind closed doors that are out of the public's view" said Vispoli.

The state's Open Meeting Law calls for deliberation to be held in posted open meetings, except for specific negotiations, personnel issues, or litigation. "These transparency laws work for Selectmen and municipal officials across the state. It can work at the State House," said Vispoli. "It is time to stop negotiating hundreds of millions of dollars in spending behind closed doors. The public has a right to know," added Vispoli. When there are differences between a House and Senate bill a six member conference committee is appointed by the Speaker and Senate President. The differences are worked out behind closed doors. Moreover, huge bundled amendments can be added to the budget, and are assembled behind closed doors not on the Senate floor. As many as 100 amendments can be consolidated into one so the public has no information on what is being passed.

HAVERHILL FARMERS MARKET RE-OPENS SAT. June 28th with more than 25 local vendors for its 36th season starting Saturday, June 28 and running through October 25 at 40 Bailey Blvd. (next to the Haverhill Police Station). The market operates from 9-1 p.m. For more information please visit www.haverhillfarmersmarket.org or find us on Facebook/ [haverhillfarmersmarket](https://www.facebook.com/haverhillfarmersmarket)

SICILIAN PROJECT

The Sicilian Project has announced the winner of its trip for two to Sicily drawing last month is Thomas DiGrazia of Kailua Hawaii! The Sicilian Project is the brain child of attorney Alfred Zappala, a former Methuen and Lawrence resident who after a trip to his ancestral land of Sicily recognized the dire need for properly educating the young, intelligent students in the English language in order to compete globally in the job market.

The mission of the Sicilian Project is to encourage formal English-language training for students in primary through elementary and high school in Sicily. All the money that is donated to the project goes directly to issuing academic grants to the best language school in Sicily, the Babilonia Language School in Taormina, Sicily. The Sicilian Project is a non-profit 501C-3 tax exempt organization and further information can be found either on Mr. Zappala's web site www.alfredzappala.com or www.thesicilianproject.com

LAWRENEC CATHOLIC ACADEMY - Open House and Registration, Wednesday, April 30th, 6:30pm. – 8pm.

Lawrence Catholic Academy has announced it is hosting an Open House and Registration for Nursery through Grade 8 at 101 Parker Street, Lawrence, MA. "Lawrence Catholic Academy strives to provide a curriculum that enhances the intellectual development of all our students, helping each to realize his/her God-given potential and grow stronger in faith", said, John M. Licciardi, Director of Advancement. "LCA is a community of believers who strive to permeate the school with the love and compassion

NOTEBOOK: PAGE: 23

2014 Valley Patriot Scholarship Winners Lawrence High Seniors Sofia Cardenas (2nd from r) Ramses Jiminez-Candelario 4th from r) and North Andover High Student Victoria DeShaies (not shown) were each given a \$300 scholarship at The Valley Patriot's 10th Annual BASH. Special thank you to the Lawrence High Alumni Association, North Andover Asst. Superintendent Gilligan and everyone who helped us facilitate this year to help local kids get to college!



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Lawrence Mayor William Lantigua's Chief of Staff Lenny Degnan was charged and convicted of bribery, conspiracy and corruption charges. Degnan was often seen throwing his weight around Lawrence City Hall, demanding that people do things "his way".

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JERRY ROBITO TO CHALLENGE FRANK COUSINS FOR SHERIFF IN 2016

The position of Sheriff should not be held by a career politician. Instead, it should be held by a law enforcement professional who has worked in corrections. The Sheriff of Essex County has been an elected position since 1856, and there has never been an elected Sheriff that has worked his way up through the corrections ranks.

Having worked for over 34 years for the Essex County Sheriff's Department, I've worked my way through the ranks and have a clear understanding of what is necessary to implement the care, custody, and control of inmates as well as keeping the public and staff safe. The most important tool in the Sheriff's Department is communication. The state retirement system is already strained and it appears that the current administration does not care that officers are retiring in their early 40's due to low morale.

In regards to the reintegration of inmates back into society, it is not conducive to lodge inmates in half way houses that are frequented by local police and are not supervised by a corrections professional. The Sheriff talks about recidivism, but through the years a vast number of inmates preparing to be released from Middleton have expressed that upon their release, they have no place to go and no money. My question is what chance do these inmates have of making a life for themselves on the outside? These are the inmates who require after care when released. Unless an individual, in this case a Sheriff, has worked up close and personal with inmates, one would not be aware of this need.



The Lawrence facility better known as “The Farm” was initially designed for non-violent inmates from Middleton that were SENTENCED and then earned the privilege to be there. Currently sending pretrial inmates that were just arrested, and have not gone through detox at the Middleton facility, SHOULD NOT be sent to an unsecure facility such as “The Farm”. The Sheriff’s Department should have more interaction with the residents of the communities that these facilities are located.

I feel with a well trained staff, along with transparency and public engagement, we can make the Essex County Sheriff's Department an accountable agency that is an important factor in keeping communities and citizens safe. I ask that all concerned citizens of Essex County visit and like my exploratory Facebook page Jerry Robito for Sheriff. I humbly ask for your feedback. jerryrobitoforsheriff@gmail.com



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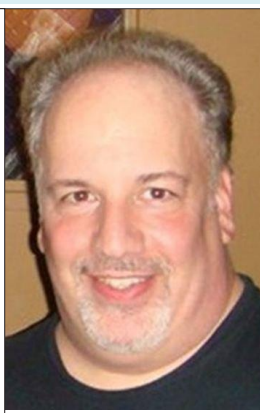
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Methuen High School Holds Distracted Driving Day

State Rep Diana DiZoglio (D-Methuen) in coordination with Superintendent Judith Scannell and local community leaders and teachers, organized the first-ever End Distracted Driving Day for Methuen High School Juniors and Seniors.

Saba Hashem and President J. Michael Conley of the Massachusetts Academy of Trial Attorneys (MATA) presided over the presentation, offering statistics on the safety crisis and asking students if they were ever guilty of distracted driving themselves. Most raised their hands. Shown during the program were videos of drivers texting and engaging in other distracting activities at the wheel. More than 500,000 Americans suffer traumatic brain injuries in motor vehicle accidents annually, roughly 20 percent of which are caused by distracted driving.

Over the past three years, MATA has been the lead Massachusetts consumer advocacy group for distracted driving. This effort began following the tragic death of Casey Feldman, daughter of trial lawyer Joel Feldman, who was killed by a distracted driver. Joel created the Casey Feldman Foundation and EndDDD.org (End Distracted Driving) in her honor and it is Casey’s passing that inspires MATA to continue its initiative.

“Distracted driving is a very serious danger to the community,” said Hashem, who is a resident of Methuen. “This is not only a teen problem, it’s everyone’s problem and it is important to empower teens to have conversations with their parents and other adults and their classmates and friends so we can end distracted driving. It is a threat to the community.”

“We need to build awareness of the dangers of distracted driving,” said Emily Stein, whose father was tragically killed by a distracted driver. “It’s not just a teen problem, it’s a problem for everyone of all ages. We hope they bring this issue home to their parents to discuss their parents’ driving habits as well. It’s also about encouraging teens to make safe choices. After all, there is nothing more important than their safety. This was a great event and the kids were amazing.”

“The presentation was outstanding, the message was clear to students that texting while driving impacts many people with very serious consequences,” said Superintendent Scannell. “The video as well as the

guest speaker hit home. Let’s hope the message spreads.”

“The presentation was timely and most appropriate for both students and staff,” said Ann Marie Krusell, Department Chair of English at Methuen High. “The video clips, discussion points, and speakers made a profound impression on the audience with poignant and memorable moments. All were touched by the honesty of the presentation and the universal appeal, which resonates with every individual. Resulting in class discussions for the rest of the day, students attached personal meaning and resolved to make better choices. Wearing pink and black bracelets as they left the building, our school and community has embraced the true meaning of being “distracted” as they face the future being much more aware. We hope to make this an annual event.”

“I don’t think teenagers, even adults for that matter, realize the severity of distracted driving,” said student Adam Marchand. “It only takes a second of distraction to take someone’s life. It’s really scary.”

“I truly thought the assembly was very eye opening and very close to everybody’s heart, because we all know of someone who drives distracted and some of us are even victims of this as well,” said student Rima Rustom. “It was great to be reminded that we could and should prevent things like that, because if I don’t want it to happen to my mom or brother, then I’m sure no one else would want to either.”

“This is an issue of public safety and I am glad we had the opportunity to address the students in time for prom season and before summer break when they will be on the road more often. I want to thank Mr. Hashem, Mr. Conley, Emily, Superintendent Scannell, the amazing teachers and students of Methuen High and everyone else graciously in attendance,” said DiZoglio.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), distracted driving means any activity that could divert one’s attention away from the task of driving. This includes not just texting or making phone calls, but any activity that’s liable to distract, such as eating or reading.

For additional information on distracted driving, please visit www.enddd.org.

Methuen Schools Are Moving Forward But Budget Poses a Challenge

D.J. Deeb
VALLEY PATRIOT PUBLISHER

Members of the Methuen School Committee have been working very hard along with Superintendent Judy Scannell and her Administrative Team to make positive changes for Methuen’s Schools. Team work, open communication, and dedication have made it possible to benefit Methuen’s students.

Since honestly taking office as a member of the Methuen School Committee in January, I can honestly say that it has been a pleasure working with my colleagues Mary Jean Fawcett, Rick Beshara, Bryan Sweet, Bob Vogler, Lynn Hajjar Kumm, and Mayor Steve Zanni. Although we do not always agree we can agree to disagree when necessary and the whole Board works together with the best interests of the students of Methuen in mind.

There are many exciting things that Methuen students can look forward to. First off, the Methuen High School Renovation project will be completed soon and students will be able to take advantage of a state-of-the-art building facility when the new school year begins in the fall. The new building eliminates the failed open concept model of teaching and affords classroom space for teachers to instruct and students to learn without being distracted by other classes around them.

Recently, the Methuen School Committee voted to approve the new High School Program of Studies, which contains a new elective course, 21st Century Skills. The course is designed to help struggling and at-risk students improve performance on standardized tests and we hope this will help to increase Methuen’s MCAS and SAT scores. Also, at the High School, the School Committee voted to implement the Administration’s recommendations to add themed Physical Education course electives to give students more options to fulfill their Physical Education requirements. All of these options will be available beginning in the Fall 2014. In addition,

the School Committee has supported the implementation of Saturday detentions to address student discipline problems at the High School.

Finally, students in grades 5-12 can look forward to a new Methuen Crew Program. Methuen Public Schools and Essex Rowing Club, Inc. have partnered to form Methuen Crew, a scholastic rowing and sculling team for Methuen Athletes grades 5 through 12. The season will run through the end of May with practice right after school and competition beginning in late April. For more information visit www.methuencrew.org. This is just another option for young Methuen athletes to take part in.

Over the next several weeks, members of the Methuen School Committee will work on a budget for Fiscal year 2015 that addresses the needs of Methuen’s students while being fiscally responsible to the taxpayers at the same time. There are some very important issues that need to be resolved. The School Committee was recently informed by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education that the City of Methuen is not meeting the state requirements for net school spending. This means that state reimbursements to Methuen schools could be in jeopardy. The City Auditor and Mayor Zanni have been made aware of the situation. Acting Methuen Schools Business Manager Frank Antonelli has been doing a great job uncovering deficiencies. The Mayor and City Council are going to have to address this problem in the coming months. Stay tuned!

D.J. Deeb is a Methuen resident and member of the Methuen School Committee. Deeb is an Adjunct Professor of History/Government at Bunker Hill Community College and an Adjunct Political Science Instructor at the University of Massachusetts Lowell. He teaches Social Studies full-time at Reading Memorial High School. He is the author of Israel, Palestine, and the Quest for Middle East Peace (University Press, 2013).



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Mayor Rivera Announces: Lawrence General Hospital to Provide Emergency Ambulance Services to the City

Mayor Dan Rivera announced today that Lawrence General Hospital, the city's leading health care provider, will expand its ambulance service for residents of the City of Lawrence from advanced life support to include basic life support.

"Partnering with Lawrence General Hospital to provide this service will ensure a high level of emergency ambulance services for Lawrence residents, and expand the Hospital's current advanced life support services to comprise basic life support in Lawrence as well", said Mayor Rivera.

"Lawrence General Hospital is a vital pillar in the community and a tremendous health care resource, providing emergency services to more than 70,000 patients a year, and this is a natural service expansion", Mayor Rivera added.

"Since Lawrence General Hospital con-

tinues to grow and invest in Lawrence, I feel it's appropriate for us to provide them with an opportunity to continue their investment and help them grow as a world class hospital", said the mayor. The hospital recently announced it would invest \$72 million in its facility, including new operating rooms, patient room renovations and infrastructure improvements.

The hospital is the only Level III Trauma Center in the area and has been providing paramedic services to Lawrence residents and the region for 27 years. Their teams of paramedics and EMT's are carefully selected, and have an average of 15 years experience. They respond to more than 10,000 calls each year.

Serving as the city's basic life support service provider, in addition to their ongoing advanced life support service, will help the hospital continue to expand their

outstanding emergency and acute care services to Lawrence and the surrounding community.

"The hospital continues to grow and invest in Lawrence. I want to support their investment and help them grow and expand their world-class hospital services", said Mayor Rivera.

The hospital is the first ALS service in MA and currently 1 of 4 services in MA authorized to use specialized medications to help secure a patient's airway.

The city will work with all current ambulance providers to ensure a smooth transition.

"Having a non-profit hospital provide these services gives us the assurance that profits won't trump quality of services. This will also erase any appearance of impropriety real or imagined between the municipality and ambulance service



providers that was common under the last administration", said Mayor Rivera.

"It makes sense to provide the hospital with this opportunity to further integrate the patient care they provide in the community. This partnership is consistent with the hospital's mission to improve the health of the people and the community they serve," said Mayor Rivera.

NECC Cuts Ribbon for El-Hefni Allied Health & Technology Center

The 300 people who attended the March 21 ribbon cutting for Northern Essex Community College's Dr. Ibrahim El-Hefni Allied Health & Technology Center in Lawrence were most impressed with the ambulance, which is embedded in the first floor of the building.

The building was constructed around the ambulance—donated by Trinity-EMS—which is being used to train students in the college's Paramedic Technology programs.

While the ambulance has a "wow" factor, the rest of the space also elicited admiration from the crowd.

The 44,000 square foot facility features a Health Education Simulation Center, where health care students receive hands-on experience in simulated environments such as a hospital intensive care unit, a trauma room, an acute care hospital room, an apartment, and a doctor's office in addition to the ambulance. The building also includes classrooms and computer labs and a Career Planning and Advising Center where students receive academic and career counseling.

"An important part of the college's mission is providing local residents with the skills and credentials that will lead to jobs, and that is just what this new facility is helping us to do," said Lane A. Glenn, president of Northern Essex.

Last year, 381 students received certificates and associate degrees from Northern Essex in health-related fields and 93 percent of those graduates are employed in their field a year after graduation, according to Glenn.

The building is named in memory of Dr. Ibrahim El-Hefni, a native of Egypt who was a longtime resident of North Andover and a successful business owner. An electrical engineer, he began his business in the basement of his home, and for 30 years provided jobs for hundreds of people. Before his death he created a foundation, now carried on by his widow, Wensley El-Hefni, which has provided significant support to the college, including a \$1 million donation to provide equipment for the new building.

Additionally, the project received funding from TrinityEMS, People's United



Bank (originally Lawrence Savings Bank), R. Kingman & Dee Webster, and the Abbot & Dorothy H. Stevens Foundation

Jobs was a common theme during the program which included remarks by President Glenn; U.S. Congresswoman Niki Tsongas; Dr. Richard M. Freeland, Commissioner, Department of Higher Education; Carole Cornelison, Commissioner, Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance; Daniel Rivera, Mayor of Lawrence; Suzanne Wright, El-Hefni Technical Training Foundation; and William J. Moynihan, Chairperson, NECC Board of Trustees.

Rivera said "This is not just a ribbon cutting. It's the rebirth of a section of our city that's been neglected for a long time. It will uplift our downtown, creating jobs and revitalizing the economy."

The facility is home to nine of Northern Essex's health care programs including Respiratory Care, Sleep Technology, Emergency Medical Technology, and

Nursing. The Dental Assistant and Radiologic Technology programs will continue to be located at the Dimitry Building at 45 Franklin St. and the iHealth Building, also on Franklin St., offers additional certificate and associate degree programs—in areas such as medical laboratory technician, healthcare technician, medical billing, medical coding, medical office assistant and ophthalmic assistant.

Architects Miller Dyer Spears—who also designed the Hartleb Technology Center on the college's Haverhill Campus—designed the three-story contemporary structure, featuring sleek silver accents. It is a silver LEED project that takes full advantage of the sun as a source of energy.

The community is invited to tour the El-Hefni Allied Health & Technology Center at an Open House on Saturday, April 5 from 10 a.m. to noon. For more information contact, Enrollment Services at 978 556-3700 or admissions@necc.mass.edu.



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KOOKEN: FROM 1

of Officer Duggan, Jason Kooken recognized my dad and introduced himself.

When my father admitted he was in fact the son of Officer Duggan, Kooken took the bracelet bearing Officer Duggan’s name off his wrist and handed it to him right at the memorial wall in front of my grandfather’s name.

My dad cries every time he tells this story and that’s why he was unable to tell this story here tonight.

As time went by, our family came to learn that Jason Kooken also organizes fundraisers for children whose parents were killed in the line of duty.

He runs events for widows and disabled officers through Law Enforcement United, and then puts on a uniform and goes back to work protecting the public as an Amesbury Police Office Officer.



Amesbury Police Officer Jason Kooken at the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial in Washington, DC touching the name of Lawrence Police Officer Tom Duggan, Sr., who was killed in the line of duty in 1990. Kooken rides his bike to D.C. every year in Duggan’s name, but had never met the officer or his son until this photo was taken in 2010.

If anyone deserves an award named the Tom Duggan, Sr., Law Enforcement Award, it should go to the man who, not having met anyone in our family, not having ever met Tom Duggan, Sr., yet honors him every year with his rides to Washington, DC in his name.

Jason Kookan is the true definition of a hero police officer, a hero military man; and Amesbury Police Chief Ouellet ... we want YOU to know that the Amesbury Police Department is very lucky to have him on the force.

House, Senate Pass VALOR Act II

Legislation strengthens 2012 VALOR Act and Enhances Commitment to Commonwealth’s Veterans

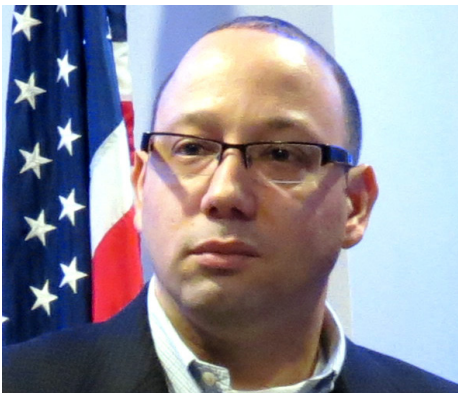
(BOSTON) – Representative Frank A. Moran (D-Lawrence) joined his colleagues in the Legislature to pass the VALOR Act II which builds upon existing legislation to expand opportunities and services for military personnel, veterans and their families.

The legislation provides increased property tax relief and enhances employment, educational and healthcare support services. It creates a home modification program to help injured veterans stay in their homes and function independently, and authorizes the Secretary of Veterans’ Services to establish enhanced training and certification for veterans’ benefits and services officers.

“This legislation sends a message to our veterans that we appreciate their bravery, sacrifice and service,” House Speaker Robert A. DeLeo (D-Winthrop) said. “Most importantly, it aids those who have supported America during some of the country’s most difficult times by providing resources to help them build a bright future. I’m incredibly proud that Massachusetts leads the nation in aiding veterans and military personnel and I believe this bill furthers that commitment.”

“Massachusetts has long led the nation in recognizing and providing for our veterans, and I am proud that this bill will further these efforts,” Senate President Therese Murray (D-Plymouth) said. “By working to expand benefits and services for veterans, we remind our men and women in uniform that their sacrifice does not go unnoticed and that the Legislature will continue to support them both abroad and at home.”

“Thanks to my colleagues in the House, the Senate and on the Committee of Veterans and Federal Affairs, today, with the passage of the VALOR Act II, we as a legislature have done more for our veterans and their families over the past few years than at any other period in last quarter century,” Representative Carlo Basile, Chairman of the Committee on Veterans and Federal Affairs (D-East Boston) said. “I am very proud of the process we have undergone to craft this bill. This legislation allows us to do our small part in helping those who put themselves in



harm’s way to protect our families and our way of life. The VALOR Act II is our way to honor veterans, the bravest men and women of the Commonwealth, and offer them in some small manner, our sign of appreciation.”

I want to thank my colleagues in the House who voted for their work on the VALOR Act II. I am proud to have voted to strengthen these critical services for veterans by passing legislation that offers training, provides increased property tax relief and career opportunities to those returning home from military service.

Said Representative Frank A. Moran (D-Lawrence)

The bill also includes the below provisions:

- Allows students currently enrolled in college, who are called to active duty, to either complete their coursework without penalty following duty, or to withdraw and receive a tuition refund;
- Increases penalties for disturbing military funerals or services;
- Enacts provisions to guard against charity fraud;
- Requires the Division of Professional Licensure to waive the initial application or certification fee for licensure for any veteran;
- Establishes a post-deployment council to make recommendations and study mental health issues to support military members transitioning to civilian life after deployment;
- Requires the Department of Public Health to issue guidance to acute hospitals and ambulance service providers to ensure the identification of veterans in emergency settings.

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This Time Get It Right! Vispoli Should be in Senate

Peter Larocque
VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

This Time Get It Right!

This admonition is for all the voters in the 2nd Essex and Middlesex Districts, meaning Andover, Tewksbury, Dracut and Lawrence. You are being given an opportunity for a do over. Coming to a voting booth near you in November of 2014 is a chance to put Alex Vispoli, candidate for State Senate for the above seat in office. I don’t want to spend too much time going over what could have been if you did this 2 years ago, but we were misled by Mr. Paul Adams, friend of former Mayor of Lawrence, Mr. William Lantigua, that he was more qualified to go against Mr. Barry Finegold in the general election. Obviously we were wrong and should have known better, but now we have a wonderful opportunity before us to make things right!

Why I am so excited about supporting Alex? It’s because he believes in smaller government and God knows what we need now more than ever is smaller and less government! Our government, I mean the way we rule ourselves in this country, was

never designed to manage programs like health care, education and welfare and on and on. But because more and more liberal thinking and progressive thinking candidates have successfully fooled voters that they know better than our Constitution, we now have what we have which is a mess!

Alex has one opponent in this race that I am aware of at this time who is Mr. Pavel Payano, a member of the Lawrence School Committee and another friend of former Mayor of Lawrence, Mr. William Lantigua. It was Mr. Pavel Payano’s vote along with former Mayor of Lawrence, and former Chairman of the Lawrence School Committee Mr. William Lantigua and 2 other members of the School Committee who are responsible for the takeover by the State Department of Education of Lawrence’s public schools. They voted to undertake a nationwide search for a new School Superintendent after being informed that the time to conduct a successful search was well past. Most good candidates had already been placed in school districts across the country. But being a Lantigua wannabe and wanting

to not go against his mentor, he voted to go ahead with the search. Consequently, the search was not successful. This action, this vote was interpreted as a lack of leadership by the then school committee, which led to their decision to take over Lawrence’s Public Schools. This my fellow voters and friends, is not someone I want representing me on Beacon Hill! Mr. Pavel Payano is most definitely a friend of Big Government which we really can do without.


Thank God we have an alternative to this intrusive and big government candidate Mr. Pavel Payano, and that is Mr. Alex Vispoli. Alex truly is a leader we can trust. He has been an Andover Selectman from 2004 until present and Chairman of the Board of Selectman, 2006, 2009, 2010, and 2013. He was elected to Massachusetts Municipal Association Board of Directors. He is currently representing the Essex and Middlesex Counties on the Massachusetts Selectmen’s Association and a member of the Governor’s Local Government Advisory Commission. He was elected to the planning board-Norfolk- 1989-1996. He also served as Representative on the Metropolitan Area

Planning Council and has a 25 year career in Information Technology Sales and Marketing in leadership roles, including current position as Director of Business Development.

He has Community Service experience in volunteering for Boy Scouts and coaching Youth Sports. Member of Saint Augustine Parish, Knights of Columbus and Service Club of Andover, married with four children.

He is the right man for this seat as our State Senator of the 2nd Essex and Middlesex District. Please join me in voting for Alex, you will be glad you did and you will be well represented! Please go to <http://www.alexvispoli.com/> and check him out for yourself, you won’t be disappointed.

God Bless you all, Peter Larocque



Peter Larocque is a former member of the Lawrence School Committee and is a regular columnist for The Valley Patriot. You can email him at: peterlarocque@hotmail.com

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Roast Beef Dinner at Erie 4, Wine Tasting at the Library, and Spring Events in Georgetown

Lonnie Brennan
VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

April opened with a Kiwanis Pancake fundraiser at the Penn Brook School, followed by a free Rabies Clinic at the Highway Department. Meanwhile, the North Shore Skating Club (a member of U.S. Figure Skating) held their ‘Spectacular Annual Figure Skating Show’, including Georgetown residents Lucinda Hough, Jessica Searbo, and Melia Vega. Ahh, it must be spring!

So, look around and poke about. The Georgetown Fish and Game holds their monthly meeting on the second Monday of every month at the club. Website is GeorgetownFishandGame.com. A great local resource for education. Gun Owner Action League (GOAL) Executive Director Jim Wallace will be the featured speaker at their April 14th meeting at 7:00 P.M. Get there early, introduce yourself, and ask to become a member. Check out the website for requirements.

Erie 4, the oldest privately owned volunteer fire association in the United States still actively fighting fires and supporting the town’s fire department will hold their Spring Fundraising Dinner on the last Saturday of April (April 26). Roast beef, potatoes, salad, green beans, rolls, and desert. This is THE place to be. Come and see all your friends (old and new) from around town. Dinner costs \$8 for adults and \$5 for children. Bring your friends, bring your neighbors. This is a great event served family-style. Come, enjoy, eat, socialize, etc. www.Erie4.org.

Wine? Wine? Did you say Wine? The Friends of the Georgetown Peabody Library will host their annual wine tasting event this year on Saturday May 3 from 6:30 – 9:00 p.m. at the Georgetown Library. The theme this years is “Connections and Collections”, highlighting the library’s role as a place for community connections and library collections. Come join your friends and neighbors in sampling a wide variety of wines while nibbling on cheese and listening to the smooth sounds of the Keith Au-

geri Trio. Tickets are \$25.00 per person and can be obtained at the Library and at Georgetown Liquors. Proceeds benefit library programs and events. The wine tasting runs from 6:30 to 8:30 pm. Coffee and desserts are served from 8:00 to 9:00 pm. – Personal note: bring everyone. This is great. My bride and I love it, but I have to say, I typically only get to taste one or two wines because I chat too darn much. It’s just such a great event to catch up with folks after a long winter. Come by! You’ll be stunned at the donations at this event. Absolutely tremendous group running these fundraisers for the Library and its programs. Thumbs up! Both hands!

Alan Aulson will be hosting his annual “Bee Party” to welcome Spring and his bride Maureen with their Fourth Annual Bee Party at their Great Rock Farm on 201 Pond Street on Saturday, April 26. Honeybees placed in hives, sheep being sheared, meet the baby goats and sheep, listen to music and enjoy the company of your neighbors. Bring a chair and maybe a dish to share (as my mother Ruth Brennan says: “Always open the doors with your elbows”, meaning, always bring something to every party you go to, never show up empty-handed).

Oh, and before I end this column, Brian Coolidge will be holding a Wilderness First Aid course from May 10-11 in Georgetown. This highly interactive class will give you practical, certified experience dealing with wilderness specific medical problems and practice real life scenarios in an outdoor setting. Details for these and more events, always, at GeorgetownTODAY.org.



Lonnie Brennan is a former Georgetown Selectman, former candidate for State Rep. publisher of Georgetowntoday.org and Winner of the 2013 Valley Patriot Good Will Ambassador Award. You can email him at: Lonnie@GeorgetownToday.org

We must Remove the Most Vulnerable Children in Danger

Joe D’Amore
VALLEY PATRIOT GROVELAND COLUMNIST

There are heroes who work with foster families and children in Massachusetts and are on the front line of caring for children at risk and I met one of them recently. She related her daily experiences of witnessing deplorable conditions in most foster homes where the standard of protection for children is food, clothing and something to sleep on. There are no standards of good quality versions of these. She related also how some legislators and most of the public believe in the fantasy that foster homes are protective havens where love and social integration are liberally applied to children who have been abused, abandoned or at risk in a number due to being victims of neglect, victims of crimes or may have a propensity to escape both their families and the foster care network. Her current case load is 18 on-going and assessment cases. Bear in mind though that case loads are measured by household where there are typically more than one child, so all told this worker is charged with the responsibility of monitoring 60 children.

Increased public awareness on how we care for our most vulnerable children is essential in light of Department of Children and Families controversial and most disturbing failure as a public agency.

It is believed that social workers allegedly lost track of Jeremiah Oliver, a 5-year-old Fitchburg boy who has not been seen since September and is presumed dead.

In light of this, recent call for reform is essential.

The most critical aspect of reform is case load. Recommendations for a maximum of 12 assessment cases and 17 on-going cases is a start, and the only way to work towards this goal is to apply adequate funding to hire up to 2500 new case workers. However, I interject that a maximum child-count should be considered also; perhaps between 30-40 maximum. Enabling social workers in the field with tablets and smart phones so that they can take photos of children at risk for flight and be able to update



Joe D’Amore is a Groveland Selectman and winner of the 2013 Valley Patriot Editor’s Choice Award.

and monitor records in real time in the field will help break the current cycle of information processing on each case which is subject to lapses in information and timeliness of reporting. Finally, child medical screenings within 72 hours of placement followed by a full examination within 30 days is an important, protective component

Governor Patrick has recently asked the Child Welfare League of America to review the agency that is initiating a lot of the recommendations just mentioned; but in perhaps the most critical area of all, DCF must immediately implement controls over the selection of individuals who are granted foster care sponsorship. The organization has recommended that there should be heightened home visitations and monitoring for foster homes where individuals have a felony background or have been granted waivers.

This idea is unacceptable and falls far too short to protect children.

The agency should adopt proposals from national groups such as American Bar Association that establish standards of barring individuals from serving as foster parents if they have felony convictions for child abuse or neglect, have committed crimes against children or other crimes such as spousal abuse, rape, sexual assault, or homicide. This standard is lacking in Massachusetts, and therefore no increased number of social work-

CHILDREN: PAGE: 23

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Convicted Felon, Degnan Will Serve 18 Months

North Andover Moderator, Selectman, Vouch for Degnan's Character

By: Tom Duggan:
from www.valleypatriot.com

Willie Lantigua's former Chief of Staff Lenny Degnan will pay a fine of \$10,000 and serve 18 months in the Middleton House of Corrections for his role in soliciting a bribe from Allied Waste, the company that contracts with the City of Lawrence for trash removal. Degnan will be prohibited from running for office again and must pay a witness fee, as well as 100 hours of community service upon release.

Degnan pressured Allied Waste to send a trash truck to the Dominican Republic emblazoned with Mayor Lantigua's name on the side, threatening to rip up their \$6.4 million trash contract with the city if they did not comply.

Judge Wilkins handed out his sentence Thursday after Degnan was convicted of solicitation of a bribe with corrupt intent, conspiracy, knowing solicitation of a bribe, and unlawful use of official position to gain an unwarranted privilege as Lantigua's Chief of Staff.

Degnan submitted forty letters from members of the community vouching for his character and asking Judge Wilkins for leniency, including letters from current North Andover Town Moderator Mark DiSalvo, North Andover Selectman Richard Vaillancourt, and former North Andover School Committeeman Bill Kelley.

North Andover Town Moderator, Mark DiSalvo, vouched for the character of convicted felon Lenny Degnan at his sentencing hearing Thursday.

"I must confess I did not believe Leonard Degnan to be guilty of anything other than committing politics," North Andover Town Moderator, Mark DiSalvo, wrote to Judge Wilkins. "I ask that you measure this man fully and show mercy to Lenny. He is a bluster of a man who has a warm and giving heart." (See full letter here)

North Andover Selectman, Richard Vaillancourt, also vouched for Degnan's character and asked the judge for leniency.

"Everyone who knows Lenny, understands he is a strong presence when he enters a room. When he makes a decision he doesn't waiver and sees it through to the

end. We also know that Lenny has a big heart, and would be available for anyone who needed his help," Vaillancourt wrote.

(See full letter on www.valleypatriot.com)

Also writing letters vouching for Degnan's character were; former Lawrence Mayor, Mary Claire Kennedy (p. 2), her former Chief of Staff, Jack McCarthy (p.2), former Lawrence City Councilor and worker for the Secretary of State's Office, Joe Quartarone, Former Lawrence Police Chief, Robert Hayden, Lawrence Building Inspector, Peter Blanchette (who is the brother of Patrick Blanchette), community activist Brian DePina, Attorney James Landy, Attorney AJ Defusco, and Attorney Mark Ford as well as at least two dozen other friends and family members.

Prosecutors Say This was No Mistake
"The crux of this case lies in the defendant's betrayal of the public trust," said assistant District Attorney Michael Patten.

"He knowingly and willfully put the personal and political interests of himself and the administration of former Mayor William Lantigua over and above the best interests of the people of Lawrence—the people he was obligated and duty-bound to serve. To that end, he brazenly abused the power of his position as Chief of Staff and acted with "corrupt intent" in orchestrating the solicitation and receipt of a bribe for the exclusive benefit of the mayor."

"As Chief of Staff, the defendant was the "right hand" of the mayor; a position which endowed him with great power and authority; a position, however, that also demanded great responsibility and accountability. He abused that power and failed to exercise that responsibility. Indeed, the evidence at trial showed that the defendant knowingly and intentionally participated in this bribery scheme not only while serving as Chief of Staff, but before even officially taking office—while still a "person selected to be" Chief of Staff."

DA Reacts – More Trials Coming
Essex County District Attorney, Jon Blodgett, told The Valley Patriot that he was "pleased the jury appreciated the seriousness of this case. This case was not about a trash truck, this case was about corruption and criminal wrongdoing perpetrated on citizens of Lawrence."

Blodgett praised the work of the Lawrence Police Department for their assistance in this investigation. "It's been a long process and a lot of people working together, especially the Lawrence Police



Patrick Blanchette and Lenny Degnan testify for a \$35 Million Bailout loan for Lawrence in 2010. Degnan has been convicted on bribery, conspiracy and corruption charges and will serve 18 months in Middleton prison.

the State Police and the FBI."

Kerry Maynihan, Director of Communications for the District Attorney, would not answer questions about additional charges against Degnan for other allegations of criminal wrongdoing or charges against Lantigua, former DPW Director, Frank McCann, or anyone else involved in the bribery scheme.

"I think it would be inappropriate for us to comment on that at this time. We have a few more cases in front of us we still have to prosecute, I wouldn't want to discuss any other possibilities at this time."

Prosecutors were looking for three to four years in state prison with a \$50,000 fine on count one, five years probation and community service after release on count 2 and 3, and three to four years in prison on count five.

"The timing suggests that [Degnan] placed a greater value on serving his, as well as, the mayor's outlying political interests, rather than focusing on the primary needs of the citizens of Lawrence. Furthermore, the tenor of the defendant's initial meeting with Stanley Walczak, and the condescending manner in which the defendant chose to address Mr. Walczak, who simply represented a company that had an ongoing and positive business relationship with the city, exemplifies the magnitude of the "corrupt intent" with which the defendant acted, and the jury recognized. In particular, the defendant boisterously threatened to "rip-up" or "void" Allied Waste's recently signed \$6.4 million dollar contract with the city."

"Mr. Walczak testified that [Degnan]

made it abundantly clear to him that he was chief of staff and that he (the defendant) and the mayor were in charge"

"On the heels of this pointed diatribe, the defendant then requested that Mr. Walczak, on behalf of Allied Waste, "donate" not one, but two trash trucks, not to the City of Lawrence, but to a town in the Dominican Republic. Moreover, the defendant made the request under the guise of donating to a poor village, when, in fact, the ulterior and true motive was to reward the mayor's outlying political base, as evidenced at trial by the signage pertaining to Mayor Lantigua on the side of the truck. This, in itself, was an abuse of power. But, the defendant did not stop there."

"He took his participation in these crimes a step further by coordinating and facilitating the transportation of the trash truck to the Dominican Republic."

Prosecutors say that Degnan "chose to stay on board and knowingly, willfully, and voluntarily took an active role in these blatant crimes and dereliction of duty. By doing so, he betrayed the public trust. When the mayor's Chief of Staff breaches the trust that the public has entrusted in him, the door to corruption has opened, and the breakdown of local government will soon follow -the impact of which can be endless and the consequences to the citizenry often irreversible. This Court cannot stand idly by and countenance this conduct."

Degnan was taken away in shackles to his jail cell and processed after sentencing.



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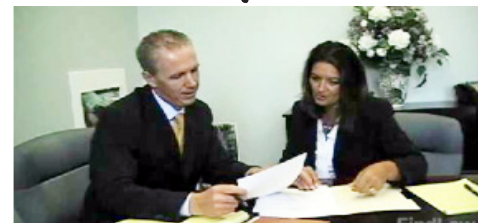
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D. B. Langevin

VALLEY PATRIOT LESBIAN COLUMNIST
VALLEY PATRIOT PRESIDENTS AWARD

When I was in third grade, just eight years old, I had a huge crush on Nicky (Nicole) Dalby. Nicky was this Alice in Wonderland look alike with blond hair, big blue eyes and dimples. I fell for her the first time she walked into Mrs. Brennan's class after the school year was well underway. Her family was from England. Her father had been transferred to the states. I made it a point to become her friend during recess so that I could be around her as much as possible. In third grade, once a month we'd watch some sort of a film. We'd pile two or three classes into one room, many of us sitting on the floor, and watch whatever was being shown. Nicky and I would sit next to each other very closely and she'd let me put my arm around her or hold her hand. I remember feeling butterflies in my stomach. I also remember thinking that if I told anyone how I felt when I was around Nicky, they might not be pleased. There were no descriptors for what I was feeling, no models and certainly no support, and somehow I knew this. It was the first time I knew I was different and the first time I knew I had to keep quiet about it. I kept quiet for the next painful twenty-one years as best I could.

Last month, on Facebook, someone posted a picture of an adorable, seven-year-old boy with dark brown eyes, and a blushing smile that gave way to dimples. The post said that this boy had told his parents he's gay and that they are supporting him. His mother said that she would support and defend him against any adverse reactions. Of course, this post was followed by hundreds of comments in support of and brutally bashing the seven-year-old and his parents. Normally I don't make comments on something that has everyone in the free world commenting on it, but I couldn't resist. I simply said that I knew I was gay when I was eight and that, in relation to this little boy, I must have been a late bloomer.

This is what Beverly A. Stevens replied to my comment, "Too young!! To be thinking about sex! Shame, shame!"

Nothing in my post referred anything to thinking about sex. Nothing in the post about the boy made reference to sex. When I was eight and had a crush on Nicky Dalby, all I thought about was putting my arm around her or holding her hand. Sex never entered my mind; I was eight for God's sake! I barely knew what sex was. I knew it was used to produce children, but I had no idea that people had sex for pleasure. I thought it was just a process of procreation and, that once adults were done with having children, they were done with having sex. I did not think as an adult thinks and I did not feel as an adult feels.

The little boy on the internet does not feel or think like an adult either, but he obviously has strong feelings for a boy



or other boys and associates it with being gay. And what's wrong with that? If he came home and said that he had a girlfriend and doesn't that mean he's heterosexual, no one would have batted an eye or thought he was thinking of having sex. They would have smiled with relief and affirmed his feelings just like these parents did. But switch attractions and labels and all of a sudden you have a seven year old thinking and feeling like an adult and ignorant homophobes making comments like Jamie English who took it to the extreme by saying, "Guess they'll (his parents) buy him the lube and rubbers he needs . . . why is the seven year old even concerned with sex." The answer is he's not! And do parents of straight kids immediately run out and buy their children sexual paraphernalia when their young child brings up a crush on the opposite sex? Hopefully the answer is no.

As stated, children do not think and feel like adults and bringing adult thoughts and feelings into this is ridiculously ludicrous. However, having examples of different lifestyles that advocate healthy relationships between two consenting adults who truly care for one another is essential to raising a mentally and emotionally well adjusted child. Thank heaven there are parents out there who will support their child if they are questioning or proclaiming their sexual preference. Sexual meaning what sex they are attracted to NOT what type of sex they want to engage in. Thank the powers that be that there are people like Roberta Bergin who commented about the boy and people's reactions to him, "This parent rocks. It's about supporting your child and believing in him/her. With all the negative comments posted here no wonder the parent has to feel so fierce. There's nothing wrong with being gay. Love is love."

See, no mention of sex in her comment.



Dani Langevin is a teacher and has a Bachelors in Fine Art and Masters in Education. She has written four young adult novels, one of which is self-published. You can email Dani at Dani-BLangevin@aol.com

Beneath The Surface

Clarity on the Issue of Homosexuality

Paul Murano

VALLEY PATRIOT EDITOR'S CHOICE AWARD

This is a very important column if you happen to be a fan of clarity. It is about an issue that has been purposefully obscured by those pushing an agenda to justify a lifestyle. The confusion has become so pervasive and widespread, even to the point of being dispersed within this newspaper (The Valley Patriot). Therefore, it is important to break through the fog to offer moral clarity on the question of homosexuality.

First, what the issue is not.

a) It is not about judging persons. It is about judging acts. Degree of culpability always depends on level of knowledge and free consent, which only God can properly judge. However, as any friend or parent knows, loving persons means condemning bad behavior for the sake of the loved one.

b) It is not about feelings, attractions, or desires. Moral questions deal with voluntary behavior, not involuntary movements of emotion or desire.

Disordered acts relating to the sensual appetites such as bulimia, alcoholism, and pedophilia are objectively wrong regardless of whether individuals involved were born with the propensity or have acquired it by habit. These acts violate the nature and dignity of the human person. The same principle applies to homosexual acts. Sodomy is intrinsically evil and can never be condoned regardless of the propensity's origin or the difficulty it may pose in some to control.

There are two common practices of psychological manipulation that are meant to influence public sentiment regarding this moral issue. The first is to make it personal and to tell of how wonderful or normal the persons involved are in other areas of their lives. This information is completely irrelevant. Let me repeat. If you are a wonderful neighbor, son or daughter, athlete, teacher, or Nobel Prize winner - none of this is relevant to the moral question of homosexuality or any moral act.

No amount of wonderfulness or normality in other areas of life, pleasant personality or skill in one's profession, can ever make evil acts good.

The other tactic used to confuse people is to equate one's desires with personal identity. For centuries the term "homosexual" has been an adjective for describing behavior. Political motives have shifted it to becoming a noun to label persons.

This manipulation of language is irresponsible and injurious to the delicate psyche of youth that might find them-

selves confused by experiencing such feelings.

No wise or humble person would ever equate disordered attraction with identity, or demand acceptance of unnatural behavior.

Clearing away the debris meant to obscure the issue enables us to see the one moral question: Are sexual acts between persons of the same sex natural and good? This ethical question demands first a teleological one: What is the purpose of the sexual reproductive organs? No one is offended if we ask the same question about the respiratory or digestive organs. In fact, pondering the latter makes it clear that acts like bulimia are objectively disordered. What, then, is the natural order of reproductive cells? Are male bodies naturally designed to sexually unite with each other? Are female bodies? Do the futile attempts to do so have potentiality for new life? Since acts of sodomy by their nature neither seal love nor give life, they are dead acts. Acts that attempt to separate pleasure from purpose and love from life, whether they are between people of the same or opposite sex, violate human nature and dignity and are by definition objectively abusive.

To summarize, the ethical question of homosexuality is not about same-sex attraction. Involuntary desire is not a moral issue. It is not about judging the worth or guilt of persons. It is about acts. The extremes of condoning homosexual behavior and hating those that engage in it are the two evils to avoid. Both extremes display cowardice. The moral question remains only this: Are homosexual acts in accord with the order of human nature as contributing to the flourishing of the individual, family and society? If the answer is no, then those who struggle with such disordered inclinations need love, not displaced compassion. We all have disordered inclinations due to the fall and are all in need of each other's support. It is truly irresponsible to label people according to their feelings and to condone so called "same-sex marriage". Such formal cooperation with evil shares in its guilt.



Paul Murano teaches philosophy and theology at Middlesex Community College, North Shore Community College, and Magdalen College. He is host of Beneath the Surface radio on WCAP (www.facebook.com/fellowtruthseekers), hosts a local TV show, and is co-host of Paying Attention! radio show.

Paul is also founder and chairman of Heartbeat Pregnancy Help in Burlington and is a singer/songwriter/musician.

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Protecting Kids

Senator Katy O'Connor Ives
VALLEY PATRIOT 1ST AMENDMENT AWARD

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month. I'm glad to report two recent developments that will strengthen safety for our children in the Commonwealth. There have been significant discrepancies in child services this past year; one being the serious challenges at the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) and the Department of Children and Families.

State Auditor Suzanne Bump released a report on March 27, 2013, which among other things found gaps in criminal background checks on employees, at residential daycare facilities and few corrections to health and safety inspection violations on the part of license holders, and little inspection follow up, few unannounced inspections and no checking license addresses against the sex offender registry on the part of EEC.

One of these private day care facilities was located in Methuen and revealed that a Level 2 registered sex offender lived at the same address. The EEC did not periodically compare day care addresses against the addresses convicted sex offenders must provide to their local police departments.

Although the license was immediately revoked, I requested a meeting with Department of Early Education and Care Commissioner Weber and immediately filed legislation to tighten background check requirements, increase state oversight, and introduce fines and license suspensions for facilities that fail to per-

form checks and correct violations. The Department of Early Education and Care has made a number of regulation changes to address these inadequacies.

The Department now requires fingerprint-based checks of national and state criminal history databases and Sex Offender Registry Information (SORI) checks from the Sex Offender Registry Board (SORB).

These new background record checks will be required for persons seeking EEC licensure, certification or approval; employees, volunteers, and interns for EEC licensed, approved, or funded programs; household members and those regularly on the premises of family child care homes; in-home non-relative EEC-funded caregivers; adoptive and foster parents and their household members; and transportation providers on behalf of any EEC licensed, approved, or funded program.

Only SORI checks will be required for EEC funded informal relative caregivers. CORI, DCF and fingerprint-based checks, with certain exceptions, will be conducted every three years and SORI checks will be conducted periodically. In certain circumstances, programs may make conditional offers of employment while awaiting the results of fingerprint-based checks. My conversations and work continues with the Department on Early Education to ensure the safety of children.

The safety of children has come under scrutiny more recently in regard to supervision and caseloads at the Depart-

KIDS: PAGE 23

Newspaper Bestows 1st Amendment Award to Senator Kathleen Ives

State Senator Kathleen O'Connor Ives (D-Newburyport) has received the first ever Valley Patriot 1st Amendment Award at the newspaper's tenth anniversary BASH last month.

The 1st Amendment award is given to individuals who show with their actions that they value the 1st Amendment to the Constitution and are willing to fight for it.

Winners of this award have made a significant difference in holding public officials accountable, fought for transparency in government and/or gone above and beyond the call of duty to defend and protect our right of free speech, a free press, freedom of religion and/or being a whistle-blower.

They are or have taken actions, not just speeches to make sure the public is more informed about what their government leaders and representatives are up to.

Without individuals like this on the front lines in the war against free speech and a free press our freedoms would be lost.

Senator Ives has been a strong voice for the 1st amendment and submitted language in House Bill 2846, the Public Records Reform Bill, which was voted with a favorable recommendation out of a joint Senate and House Committee.

Also winning the Valley Patriot 1st Amendment Award was Massachusetts State Auditor Suzanne Bump.

Bump's office released an audit of the Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance (the state's welfare



agency).

Among other things, Bump's audit found 1,164 dead people receiving welfare benefits, and 30,000 blank EBT cards (welfare cash cards) completely unaccounted for.

Despite taking grief from her party and in particular Governor Deval Patrick over the public expose of fraud on his watch, Bump did not relent.

For standing up to her party and speaking out about the corruption in the state's welfare system, Bump was chosen by The Valley Patriot for our second 1st Amendment Award.

MA Communities Unite to Combat Heroin Epidemic

Christine Morabito
CONSERVATIVE COLUMNIST

Because of its proximity to Interstates 495, 95 and 93, the Merrimack Valley has been uniquely impacted by a shocking increase in heroin and prescription drug abuse. The drugs are reportedly entering Massachusetts by way of New York City and the Texas border. Making matters worse, the now inexpensive heroin is being laced with fentanyl, an extremely potent painkiller, causing an alarming number of overdoses.

Instead of leaving the problem to police and other emergency responders, citizens of the Valley are partnering with healthcare professionals, hospital administrators, legislators and recovering addicts and their families, to bring the issue out of the shadows and to find solutions. Hence, the creation of the Merrimack Valley Prevention and Substance Abuse Project by former Methuen City Councilor, Phil Lahey and community psychologist, Jennifer Burns, who hope to raise awareness and remove the stigma for addicts who desperately need help.

The group meets monthly and has the support of Rep. Diana DiZogio and State Senator Kathleen O'Connor Ives, who are looking at legislative solutions. Last month at Methuen City Hall, project members and others testified in front of the newly formed State Senate Special Committee on Drug Abuse and Treatment Options.

The senate committee is chaired by Jennifer Flanagan, with Senators Linda Dorcea Forry, William Brownsberger, Joan Lovely, John Keenan and Richard Ross, who are touring the state in response to the 47 percent increase in heroin-related overdoses since 1999.



At the Methuen hearing, senators heard from concerned parties with not only intimate knowledge of the issues and challenges, but thoughtful solutions as well. Methuen Police Chief, Joseph Solomon stressed that this is both a heroin problem and a prescription drug problem, because often heroin addiction starts with prescription painkillers. Users switch to heroin due to its low cost and availability. He suggested that parents be as concerned about their medicine cabinets as they are about their liquor cabinets. To that end, Methuen offers a Prescription Drug Turn-In program, removing medicines of potential abuse from area homes.

Solomon presented these sobering statistics: Heroin overdoses in Methuen have increased 105 percent from 2011 to 2013 and arrests and/or summons on heroin charges are up 108 percent. Over the last 6 months, Methuen has had 46 heroin overdoses – more than in all of 2013. Neighboring cities are reporting

equally shocking numbers. Lawrence Police Captain, Roy Vasque told me their heroin arrests are up 100 from this time last year.

Chief Solomon is advocating that first responders be trained to administer nasal Narcan, a medication that can reverse an opiate overdose. He also recommended drug education beginning in elementary school with classes for parents as well. Solomon would like to see severe penalties for those convicted of drug trafficking and a change in focus for those addicted – from less punishment to more treatment.

A repeated concern was the severe shortage of long-term treatment programs, which experts feel are vital to the addiction recovery process. While many facilities offer detoxification, (averaging 5 days) the patients often return to toxic environments, making sobriety unlikely. So begins the vicious cycle.

Others testifying were Rep. Linda Dean Campbell, who plans to propose

legislation for expanding treatment options. Essex County Sheriff, Frank Cousins spoke of his successful substance abuse programs and asked the committee to consider more financial support going forward.

The committee heard passionate testimony from former State Senator, Jim Jajuga, who blames the opiate crisis on Purdue Pharma, the maker of OxyContin. The high addictability of OxyContin was well-known and warned of from the start, although not disclosed by Purdue. Oxy is both addictive and expensive, making it a favorite among drug dealers. A single 80 milligram pill costs \$80. Since few users can afford such a habit, they resort to cheaper opiates to feed their addiction. Jajuga encouraged the senators to discuss this matter with Massachusetts Attorney General, Martha Coakley. There is a precedent for such litigation - in June of 2013, the drug maker was ordered to pay \$4 million in damages to a county in eastern Kentucky.

Many voiced the need for an increase in funding. A common theme of the hearing was that we can choose to pay now or we will surely pay later, in terms of incarcerations, multiple detoxes, higher crime rates and deaths by overdose.

The Merrimack Valley Prevention and Substance Abuse Project will meet again at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, April 29 at Methuen Police Department's Sanborn Hall, 90 Hampshire Street. The public is welcome and encouraged to attend.



Christine Morabito is a resident of Haverhill and former President of the Greater Boston Tea Party. You can email her at christine.morabito@hotmail.com

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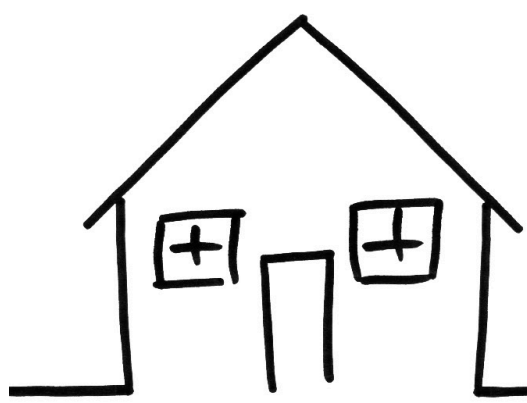
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The Valley Patriot's 10th Anniversary BASH!



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The Valley Patriot's 10th Anniversary BASH head table. (L to R) Valley Patriot co-owner Ralph Wilbur, Chris Eldredge, PuppyGirl Kate Whitney, Valley Patriot publisher Tom Duggan, Pennie Hale, Al Getler and Chrstine Morabito. At right Former Tribune publisher Al Getler gets a Valley Patriot championship Softball T-Shirt from The Valley Patriot's DCS-Andover Co-Ed Softball team. Video of the BASH is available on YouTube.com.



PHOTOS: R. MUSHOW PHOTOGRAPHY



PHOTOS: R. MUSHOW PHOTOGRAPHY



Top Left photo: Groveland Selectman and Valley Patriot columnist Joe D'Amore, winner of last year's Editor's Choice Award holds the Tom Duggan banner, Lawrence Firefighter Juan "Manny" Gonzalez and Amesbury Police Officer Jason Kookken winners of this years Valley Patriot, Officer Tom Duggan Sr. Law Enforcement Award and Tom Duggan shaking Officer Kookken's hand. Middle Top Photo: Valley Patriot lesbian columnist Dani Langevin and political cartoonist Dave Sullivan winners of the 2014 President's Award. Top Right Photo: Valley Patriot co-owner Dr. Charles Ormsby presents Paul Murano with the 2014 Editor's Choice Award. Bottom left: Methuen's own John Molori roasts Tom Duggan. Middle Bottom The Gang from 3D Barber Shop in Methuen were one of our three gold sponsors. Botton Right: Valley Patriot Publisher Tom Duggan gives Lawrence Resident Rich Russell the Good Will Ambassador Award. The Event was held at the Lawrence Firefighters Relief's In on Market Street in Lawrence.

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Photo Above: Adam and the gang of "Prospect Hill" invited Tom Duggan to join them as they sang their hit song "Roller Coaster". Bottom Photo Matt and Janet McLennan of McLennan and Company Century 21 recognized as our first 2014 BASH Gold Sponsor with Dr. Charles Ormsby.

State Senators should strengthen NH Domestic Violence Laws and Further Protect our Beloved Four-Legged Friends

D.J. Bettencourt
VALLEY PATRIOT NEW HAMPSHIRE COLUMNIST

State Senators should strengthen New Hampshire’s domestic violence laws and further protect our beloved four-legged friends.

This month, the New Hampshire State Senate has the opportunity to strengthen New Hampshire’s domestic violence laws and further protect our beloved four-legged friends.

House Bill 1410 provides our judges with flexibility in handling difficult domestic violence cases to grant custody of a pet to the individual seeking protection if appropriate to do so. Such an order can also prevent an alleged offender from having contact with the pet and using it as leverage against the victim to drop the order. Finally, the legislation adds animal cruelty to the factors judges can consider when determining whether a protective order is warranted. Each provision is an important addition to New Hampshire’s already strong civil domestic violence laws.

These protections are hardly a new concept. If Senators do the right thing by passing HB 1410, New Hampshire will join the rest of New England and become the 26th state to permit the inclusion of pets in protective orders.

Some have questioned whether this legislation is necessary. As the Director of Community Relations at the Salem Animal Rescue League, I am sadly familiar with the necessity of this legislation. The National Coalition Against Domestic Violence found that between 25% and 40% of battered women feel they are unable to escape abusive situations because they worry about what will happen to their pets should they leave. There is legitimate evidence that people involved in violent acts against animals present a danger to the public that must be addressed.

To some, staying in an abusive situation for any reason is hard to understand. However, I speak with individuals every-



day who without hesitation would put their own safety or lives at risk to protect their pets. This legislation recognizes the reality of how the majority of individuals view their relationship with their animals—not as pieces of property but as valued members of their family. In fact, a recent Gallup poll found that 98% of Americans consider pets to be companions or members of the family. Unfortunately, an element of domestic violence situations includes the abuser alienating their victim from friends and family, effectively removing their support systems. In these situations, pets are oftentimes victims’ primary source of support and comfort, taking on even more emotional significance and attachment than a pet in an otherwise healthy environment.

The facts and statistics bolster the importance of HB 1410. According to the Animal League Defense Fund, animal abusers are five times more likely to commit violent crimes against humans. This is a direct and undeniable link between individuals who kill or injure their pet and subsequently harm their spouse or children. Additionally, the American Humane Society reports that 71% of pet-owning women entering shelters reported that their abuser had injured,

PUPPIES: PAGE 27

April is Prevention of Animal Cruelty Month

Tracey Zysk
VALLEY PATRIOT DOGGIE COLUMNIST

Your VOICE does MATTER!

As many of you know I pride myself on being a voice for the animals and this month I plan on speaking louder. Why? Well education is key, acknowledgment is powerful and one human voice can save the life of one animal or the lives of hundreds of animals.

April is “Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Month.” The ASPCA, The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, began this important month for animals eight years ago and it is now a nationwide celebration of the human-animal bond and of victories on behalf of animals.

Here in Massachusetts we are blessed to live in a state that realizes residents treat their animals like family members. Our political leaders work endlessly with law enforcement and residents to help prevent cruelty to animals. But of course this really starts at home; with you, with me, with your children and your neighbors.

In Massachusetts, animal abuse is considered a felony! If you witness an animal being hurt or mistreated, neglected or used for unlawful purpose call 911 IMMEDIATELY. Please do not look the other way, please don’t feel like you are misinterpreting a situation. If it doesn’t seem right, feel right or isn’t a manner you would treat your pets, then call the police.

- How can you help:
1. Be Aware - Know your neighborhood, know your neighbor’s pets. Keep an eye out for any immediate or long term changes. For example: a neighbor leaves his dog tied to a tree all day all night, or a dog that was once a healthy weight suddenly seems frail. Behavior changes can be a sign of abuse; that super friendly dog now seems aggressive or timid, may be worth questioning. The police and animal control need your tips, and your calls to do their investigation. Remember, this is all to help a helpless animal.
 2. Recognize the signs of animal abuse - Animal abuse is physical and emotional. Some of the signs are the following:
 - * A person hitting, striking or otherwise physically abusing an animal.
 - * Dogs/cats who are repeatedly left alone without food and water, often chained up in a yard or roaming neighborhoods.
 - * Dogs/cats who have obvious pain
 - * Dogs/cat who are kept outside without shelter in extreme weather conditions. This includes all seasons of weather: rain, snow, freezing or heat and left directly in the sun.
 - * Animals who cower in fear or act



April is
Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Month

- aggressively when approached by their owners or any other adult.
- * Tick or flea infestations or with knotted, dirty or mangy fur. Such conditions, if left untreated by a veterinarian, can lead to an animal becoming sick or even death.
 - * Wounds on the body. Especially open wounds that don’t seem to be healing or sores that keep reopening.
 - * Extremely thin, starving animals, and these animals may be scouring through trash cans and dumpster looking for food.
 - * Limping and/or whimpering
3. Talk to your kids and teach them the importance of treating animals with kindness and respect. Kids learn by example: teach them the importance of fresh daily water and food, proper exercise playing nicely and paying attention to your family pet. A parent or adult should take on the responsibility of teaching children the importance of accepting and including the family dog/cat as a family member.
 4. Set a good example for others. If you have pets, be sure to always show them the love and good care that they deserve. But it’s more than just food, water, and adequate shelter. If you think your animal is sick, bring him to the veterinarian. Don’t hold back on his care, animals sometimes can hoard their sickness and pains. If you have a doubt, take your pet to the vet!
 5. Be responsible and have your animals spayed or neutered. - The health benefits of spaying and neutering will help with the longevity of your pet’s life. It is also a great preventative for over populating, many of these litters are unwanted and left outside to live a feral life.
 6. Support local shelters or animal rescue organizations. Volunteering at an animal shelter is a great way to learn about what is happening in our community and it’s a great way to make a positive difference. It is also a wonderful and bonding experience for the entire family
- Massachusetts is second to New York state with laws that help protect and prevent animal abuse. It is worth reviewing and getting to know our MA state Animal laws and Animal Cruelty laws.
- Massachusetts general animal laws-Chapter 140 section 150

ZYSK: PAGE 30

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THE SHIFT

Remembering Lt. Ed Walsh, Mike Kennedy Boston Fire Department: EOW 4-1-14

John Macdonald
VALLEY PATRIOT LOWELL COLUMNIST

The shift began that
fine summer's day
He arrived on time
not a moments delay.
Tactics on his brain
and was considered the best
Of all of the men who wore
the same badge on their chest.

He labored and trained
with all their support
Loving his friends as his family,
their station, their fort.
The fire, the battle,
of which all of them waited
Rely on your buddy,
independence they hated.

The alarm was their warning
For which they waited and sprang
Sirens, bugles and bells
That echoed as they rang.
He was the one they respected
and admired the most
Legendary blazes he battled,
they called him the ghost.

That day was not long
So clear and so crisp
As the alarm rang they
sprung into action,
some pumping their fist...
The engine was clean
and shined in the sun
His crew on the ready,
second to none...

Arriving on scene the building ablaze
His crew rushed through the door
for all to amaze.
He led them to rescue young children,
woman and men
Twenty then fifty, perhaps
one hundred and ten...

All was thought to be rescued as the
building weakened and swayed

He cleared the building of his crew,
and suddenly he stayed.

For he heard a faint voice from the
end of the hall
Where did it come from?
He thought they rescued them all.
The fire it rose and
deafened his senses
His father appeared and
they mended their fences

Walking along a cool stream where
they sat and they sipped
Discussed his final walk
and the end of his trip...
He was asking his maker
for one final call
Allowing him one more rescue
of the girl down the hall.

Her prayer it was answered and
outside she arrived
Coughing and hacking, not dead...
...yes alive.
At the end of the fire,
the scene, yes his grave
At half mast the flag would soon wave.
All they found of him, his helmet,
some hose and a boot.
Most of it found,
by his stations new recruit...

The firehouse in black, his locker the
alter, his bench the pew
All that prayed, so many he knew.
The bagpipes they played,
the parade, the procession
All that took notice
they learned a hard lesson.

It was they that he told,
you should never turn back
For in a flash of an eye you may slip
through the cracks.

Answers they seek,
for their brother they sift
Wishing that day,
he came home from his shift.

John Macdonald
VALLEY PATRIOT LOWELL COLUMNIST

As I sat on a barstool at my local VFW fifteen or so years ago I watched an older veteran pouring over his emotions, adventures overseas and through numerous bottles of beer with another fellow veteran. The moment I witnessed, seemed distant, but familiar as I listened to the two connect, relate and drink their way through what was a pretty loud discussion. At the same time the details seemed very intimate to them of a battle from long ago. The two veterans I described as it turned out, shared the same battle field and experiences only the two of them could have appreciated in that given night. It was a reunion unscheduled, unscripted and raw. I myself a Desert Storm veteran, sat and watched them through much younger eyes and said to myself that I hoped that would never be me. Sitting in a bar room, bearing my soul to another in some sort of tough luck conversation.

As time has gone on and with experiences that have taught me better in life, what I wasn't prepared for mentally back then, prepared me for today. I learned since the days of Desert Shield/Desert Storm in Saudi Arabia that it's good to talk about things and share some of the demons that keep you awake at night. Because if you do, they may not completely ever go away, but perhaps you can start to replace the old memories with some better ones.

Last November at a veteran's event I had a brief moment to feel the same connection with another veteran that I hadn't felt in a long time. I ran into then Mayor-Elect of Lawrence Dan Rivera, who I didn't know at the time was a Desert Storm Veteran himself. As it turned out after a brief discussion Mayor Rivera passed through the same place I had been stationed at in Operation Desert Storm. A little known place called King Kalid Military City in northern Saudi Arabia. On a tiny airstrip, some twenty years ago, two guys from the Merrimack Valley unwittingly crossed paths. We then both discussed what a neat idea it would be to have a POW/MIA Chair Dedication after he was inaugurated.

You see, good things can happen when veterans connect. I had my VFW moment.

I shared my story with Mayor Elliott of Lowell and he decided to turn ideas into action. Soon after both Mayors were inaugurated in January I received a text message from Mayor Elliott that read

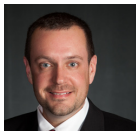
something like this... "That POW/MIA Chair Dedication idea, can we make that happen... ASAP?" The rest as they say is history. As a result of that moment back in November, now on Tuesday April 15th, both the City of Lowell and the City of Lawrence will hold chair dedications at each city hall in honor of our POW/MIA's.

In conjunction with Rolling Thunder of MA, who dedicates chairs in towns and city halls across Massachusetts, along with Joe Machado, his fellow directors of Veterans Assisting Veterans, Lowell and Lawrence Veterans Services Director's Eric Lamarche and Jamie Melendez, the two city halls will have a POW/MIA Chair Dedication take place. Both Mayor Rivera and Mayor of Lowell, Rodney Elliott are spearheading and will be attending each other's events that will take place in Lawrence City Hall at 2:30pm and in Lowell City Hall at 5:30pm.

With the assistance of local businesses and organizations that always seem to come through and help the community, David Daly of Pridestar Ambulance will donate the POW/MIA Chairs at both city halls, The Lowell Spinners is donating the flags and Veterans Assisting Veterans are donating the ropes and stanchions that will surround the chairs. Enterprise Bank will donate the refreshments. Also both Lowell Police Department and Lawrence Police Department will be organizing a motorcycle and public official's procession between the two cities. A true display of caring and patriotism as well.

In addition, a Lawrence business named The Coffee Cann Café and the Cann family decided to jump on board and they will be hosting a dedication of their own at 1pm on April 15th at their location at 290 Merrimack Street in Lawrence. The public is invited to attend all these events.

It really is amazing what can happen when veterans, the community and business come together.



John MacDonald is the President/CEO of Big Decisions, LLC, which is a management consulting business that concentrates on offering strategic advice on Marketing, Public Relations, Economic/ Business Development and Social Media. John has a long career of success, achieving record results in the communications field and spending over 20 years managing marketing budgets, driving the bottom line in the financial services, restaurant, retail and real estate industries.

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NOTEBOOK: FROM PAGE 6



of Jesus Christ”, said Mr. Licciardi. Lawrence Catholic Academy offers: Individual Attention, Shadowing Program, Anti-Bullying Policy, Financial Aid, Tuition Rewards Program, Child Circuit Vouchers, Advanced Technology, State Certified Faculty, Diversity, Interactive Whiteboards, Before & After School Programs and over 100 Years of Academic Excellence.

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KIDS: FROM 17

ment of Children and Families. Previously, the Department of Children and Families allowed people with felony records to become foster parents and care for our most vulnerable and endangered kids. Recently, the State Senate passed a Supplemental Budget for Fiscal Year 2014 that included an amendment I voted in favor of. The amendment places a six month hold on any new foster care placements in families with members that have been convicted of a felony, unless the

Department of Children and Families can produce a written finding that determines that such a placement is necessary and not harmful. The amendment also calls for the Office of the Child Advocate to examine any previous placements of children in the same situation. The amendment passed the Senate by a 32-5 vote. The bill now moves on to a conference committee where it will be finalized in conjunction with the House’s version of the Supplemental Budget.

CHILDREN: FROM 13

ers, technological enhancements or field policy changes can help overcome the specter of danger facing many children when they are in the care of dangerous persons. Reform is difficult for any public agency, especially when it is under intense public scrutiny such as the DCF is. But

such reform is essential and rehabilitation of the agency must begin now. We have a responsibility as a society to remove the most vulnerable children from dangers associated with abandonment, abuse, neglect and as victims of both red tape and people that are predisposed to harm them when they are in their care.

COMARGO: FROM 5

of the double track project creating a station would increase access to the area. The plan would make the Lawrence Municipal Airport even more accessible as well. The plan will create job opportunities and generate much needed economic growth. As a candidate, I see myself working with state and local officials to make this plan a reality. Our economic prosperity is a matter of choice, not chance. There’s

so much potential in our community, but we need to seize opportunities like this to move forward. As state representative, you can count on me to move forward because our community deserves no less. Oscar Camargo is a candidate for State Representative for the 14th Essex District. He is a 14-year Army veteran with tours of duty to Kosovo, Iraq, and Afghanistan. He is a North Andover resident and active member of his church and community.



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STEWART: FROM 5

currently being planned or are already underway. “My goal now is to make sure things are running the same way. We are on a good path. We are running on all eight cylinders, we need to keep a straight and narrow course for prosperity.” “We have the facilities plan, get the fire station done, the school officers issue, get town hall renovated, these re three or four year plans and I will be able to be there to get all this done without an over-

ride. No overrides.” Asked if he made the “no override” position a campaign issue he said that he hadn’t. “No, it wasn’t a theme of the campaign,” he said laughing. “I don’t have a theme. Just work your butt off, that ‘s the theme. Work your butt off, contact a lot of people, talk to them. That’s what it is. Work your butt off.” Asked if he had anything to add he said, “ Happy new year!”

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2014 Yankee Homecoming – Come join our team and have some fun!

Rebecca Pearson
VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

The word is out that Yankee Homecoming is here again and with early returns coming back, it looks to be bigger and better than ever. This July, Newburyport will again be hosting its annual eight-day celebration that has so many fun filled family events for its residents and the thousands of visitors that ascend on the city year after year. Homecoming week has over 100 exciting events during the eight days for every walk of life, which 20-25 of the events are coordinated by the Yankee Homecoming Committee. This year’s General Chairperson, Michael Volpone, has been working hard to get the week ready, which will hold the 57th annual event from July 27th - August 3rd.

Micheal Volpone, 48, was born and raised in Newburyport. He graduated from the Immaculate Conception and Newburyport High Schools and grew up enjoying this amazing festival, which he now enjoys with his family. Michael got his start with Homecoming when he used to march in the parade back in the mid 1970’s when he was part of the Pioneer League, now he finds himself 30 plus years later getting his start in 2008, from then General Chairperson Essex County Sheriff Frank Cousins to chair



the parade and then again for the next three years. Last year he was involved in many of the events as he prepared for the jump to the General Chair role.

His family has also enjoyed the festivities since they moved back to the area in 1999. His wife Kathy, who has been very supportive, had her Girl Scout troop march or they entered a float every year up to last year. Their five children (Patrick, 22; Ryan, 20; Erin, 18 who will also be in charge of this year’s edition of the program book; Meghan, 13; and Tommy, 11) have been helping out with the Yankee Homecoming

parade and then last year, collecting donations at the Waterfront Concerts.

The theme this year is “Volunteer: You Make the Difference” which is dear to the chair’s heart for two reasons. The first was while he was in High School, NHS long time history teacher, Jean Foley found an extra spot in her Operations Close Up trip to Washington DC and Volpone got that spot. Foley told him to take a chance and broaden his horizons, which left a lasting mark on him for years. The other was from Homecoming’s 1st General Chairman, George Cashman, who would pull Michael aside during their Hibernians meeting (Newburyport has a division of the national Irish organization of the Ancient Order of Hibernians) urging him to get involved before his passing in 2007, Volpone joined the next year and been very active ever since.

“Volunteers are essential for the success of the eight day event. There are over 100 volunteers each year who sign up to work

many events, or simply a couple of hours. The committee welcomes any help anyone wants to get involved with,” says Volpone. “Each of the events has a chair, who will coordinate the event and the volunteers needed. There is a link on the Yankee Homecoming website (Yankeehomecoming.com) where people can sign up to join, or you could attend one of the monthly general meetings at the Starboard Galley starting at 7pm. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday April 23th.”

This year’s rendition of Newburyport’s long standing tradition will bring back many of the fan favorites like Olde Fashion Sunday, the Market Square Craft Fair, Downtown Entertainment, Family Day at Maudsley, the amazing fireworks display on Super Saturday, and the Parade to culminate the week. Another fan favorite is the nightly Waterfront Concert series, which is free to the public, will bring many new groups performing each night. Each night will have a different type of music so everyone should get a chance to enjoy their favorites.

In addition to these annual great events, we have some blasts from the past coming back. New volunteers have stepped up to chair these events that in the past years were also well attended, in the Fashion Show and the Lighted Boat Parade along the Merrimac River. Another event still under construction is a charity softball game, that was last played in the late 1990’s. There will first be a 32 team elimination tournament before Homecoming week and then the winner of the tournament playing a local select or celebrity team in the city (place to be determined). Profits will be

NEWBURYPORT: PAGE 27



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SHEILA MULLINS' RECIPE CORNER

It's obvious that I like to experiment in the kitchen & this was no exception. I was inspired by a Dunkin' Donuts ad of all things when it hit. Jerry said the second he took a bite," You HAVE to put this in the Valley Patriot! They'll go crazy over this!" So blame Jerry for this one! LOL I have to say, though, it's VERY tasty!

Not the same old breakfast sandwich
serves 2
prep time: 10 minutes
elapsed time: 20 minutes
Dipping

Sauce:
1/8 c + 2T real, pure maple syrup
2 T butter
hot sauce to taste
Sandwich:
4 slices great quality sour dough bread (such as When Pigs Fly, it makes a huge difference here)
1 t fresh thyme, chopped
1/4 c ricotta cheese
2 eggs
1/2-3/4 c baby spinach leaves or other greens, divided
1/4 c grated pecorino romano cheese, divided
freshly ground

black pepper, to taste
Preheat oven to 325°F. On a baking sheet, take romano cheese & place on sheet in roughly the same size & shape as bread. Bake until melted, about 5 minutes. Reserve.

Set bread to toast to your liking. Reserve.

In a microwaveable cup, place dipping sauce to heat & butter to melt over medium power, about 1 minute. Pour into 2 small cups or ramekins.

Heat a large skillet over medium high heat. While pan is heating, crack eggs into bowl; add ricotta, thyme, & pepper. Whisk well. When hot, spray with oil & turn heat down. Ensure that pan is completely coated. Pour egg in & cook until nearly done, but still a bit runny on top. Divide egg "omelet."

Assembly process: Take the toast, on one slice, place the greens, then fold the divided omelet to fit, place toasted cheese "cookie" (tuille) on the omelet & top with toast. Use the dipping sauce & enjoy your sandwich!

How many of you some days do what I do, get home from work & stare at the

fridge wondering what you are going to make for dinner that night? I'm glad I'm not the only one! This was born from one of those nights. I simply took what I had "lying" around & made a fine dinner. This would have made sense to have served over rice; however, since I'm limiting the amount of carbs I'm taking in I featured it here without rice. Had I made rice, it would have been brown.

Serves: 2-4, depending on whether rice is served or not
prep time: 15 minutes

elapsed time: 35 minutes
1 lb chicken, boneless & skinless either thighs or breasts, but into 3/4" cubes
2 T cornstarch
1 c chicken stock
1/4 c plum sauce
1/3 c soy sauce
1 T chopped fresh ginger
2 cloves minced garlic
Cayenne pepper to taste
3 T canola or peanut oil
1 small onion, sliced
1 lb. asparagus, trimmed & cut on diagonal into 1" pieces



1 c sugar or snow peas
1 c sliced shiitake mushrooms, optional
Pinch of salt & pepper to taste
In medium bowl, coat chicken with cornstarch, salt, & pepper. Remove & set aside.
In a small bowl, add stock, plum sauce, ginger, &

cayenne.

On medium high, heat half of oil into wok or large skillet. Add chicken & cook until browned, 5-7 minutes. Remove & reserve.

Add remaining oil, vegetables, & garlic. Stir fry 5 minutes or until cooked al dente. Add stock mixture & stir fast. Boil until thick which takes just a few minutes. Add chicken & cook only until chicken is hot. Serve over rice if desired.

Recipes are created by Sheila Mullins & taste tested by Jerry & Sheila Mullins. Sheila lives in Newburyport & is a personal cook. She can be reached at Sheila_A_Mullins@hotmail.com & she looks forward to hearing from you.



Cornerstone Action

Freedom and equality under the law for all. In New Hampshire, we sometimes take this for granted. But our state constitution says that equality of rights under the law shall not be denied to anyone on account of race, creed, color, sex, or national origin.

Yet twenty-three New Hampshire senators seemingly want to pick and choose who gets freedom and equal treatment, and who doesn't. Two weeks ago, they voted to add the novel legal concept of "sexual orientation" to the state constitution via CACR 17.) The proposed constitutional amendment will soon go to the New Hampshire House and—if it receives the necessary three-fifths majority--will go on the ballot statewide this November.

This intrusive restructuring of our state constitution would be a first-in-the-nation. No other state has attempted to place in a document that is supposed to protect everyone special protections for some, and coercion for others. No other state has attempted to create victims of discrimination in such a fashion, nor attempted to compromise and unjustifiably burden First Amendment freedoms that should rightly be enjoyed by every citizen.

New Hampshire legislators should recall that freedom is for all Americans. Indeed, their first responsibility as lawmakers is to protect and uphold our constitutionally-protected freedoms, not pass and enact laws that guarantee special safeguards for some, but bully and punish others.

We are all currently protected under the New Hampshire constitution. So why the change? Why aren't our lawmakers preserving freedom for everyone—something that is good for our economy, the business community, and our state? No one should have to beg the state to exercise their constitutionally-protected freedoms. Yet, that is exactly what this proposed constitutional amendment would do.

Notably, only the prime sponsor, Sen. David Pierce (D-Lebanon) testified in support of this change. But no senator ques-

tioned the detrimental impact of such a bill. No senator questioned how adding such a malleable legal construct into the law would impact the economy and businesses. Not a single senator asked about the religious liberty implications of such a constitutional amendment, or how it would impact those individuals and businesses that adhere to traditional views on sexuality and marriage. What will it mean for an adoption agency, for example, that seeks to place children in homes with both a mom and a dad?

The day the CACR passed the full Senate, Sen. Pierce stated: "It's a momentous day for me, personally, but it's not about me. It's a momentous day, I think, for the state that we're committed to equality . . ."

But this proposed constitutional amendment would enact the opposite of equality. If would enact inequality under the law, allowing the selective selection of who gets freedom and who doesn't—even punishing some New Hampshire citizens for simply exercising their freedoms. Such divisive treatment runs afoul of the nobility and diversity of our state. Freedom is not negotiable and our lawmakers shouldn't compromise our freedom.

Everyone in New Hampshire, regardless of sexual orientation, deserves protection under the state constitution and enjoys such protection with its current language. New Hampshire lawmakers should be safeguarding these freedoms and not promoting unjust and coercive constitutional amendments under the façade of "equality."

Passage of CACR 17, however, would suppress these freedoms, and citizens of this great state will likely face lawsuits for simply trying to exercise their freedoms.

Our state motto is "Live Free or Die." Let's not enact a measure that would change that motto to "Live free and be sued." Legislators should oppose CACR 17 because freedom is not negotiable and sexual preference and behavior should never trump our fundamental freedoms.

Money Needed for Pentucket Lake

The playground at Pentucket Lake Elementary School is in need of replacement. The structure is currently off-limits to the kids because of the danger it poses. Pentucket received \$25,000 from state funding, and we need to raise the rest of the money by June or lose it altogether. We have raised (these were yesterdays numbers) \$37,000 to date.

You can always call or email Jillregin menciis who is heading this. her number is 978-994-2899 for a more accurate

numbers.

Here's how people can help, the McDonald's at 53 South Main St. in Bradford, will donate 15 percent of all sales made between 4 and 7 p.m. April 28; and a car wash and yard sale is slated to take place from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. May 10 at Pentucket Lake Elementary. Donations may also be made payable to the Pentucket Lake Playground Fund and mailed to Pentucket Lake Elementary School, 252 Concord St., Haverhill, MA 01830. All donations are tax-deductible.

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NEWBURYPORT: FROM PAGE 24

split amongst Yankee Homecoming, the ALS foundation in the name of longtime resident and NHS Graduate Brent Paulhus and a third (discussion of the Restore the Stadium fund is a strong possibility).

“Yankee Homecoming strives to bring something for everyone each year. The week is run solely by volunteers, who give up their time for the enjoyment of others. They love doing what they do, as they come back year after year.” The volunteers are hardworking and dedicated to the festival’s success and hopefully this year will see some new faces joining returning ones in doing what the General Chair was hoping in this year’s theme would do – Make the Difference.

Yankee Homecoming brings families and community together. So get ready to enjoy Yankee Homecoming 2014 and let the memories of this time-honored tradition continue to warm the hearts of our area. See you all there!

Arts and Entertainment for the Greater Newburyport Area:

Firehouse Center for the Arts, Market Square, Newburyport, MA 01950, www.Firehouse.org

London’s Calling, Sat, April 12th, s ave the date for the annual Firehouse spring fundraiser event. This year’s theme is London!

17 State Street Café - 17 State Street, Newburyport, MA 01950, www.17StateStreetCafe.com

Artty and LJ of Long Gone – Americana, country & bluegrass, April 4th, 7 - 9:30pm

Susan Levine & Doug Kwartler, April 5th, 7-9:30pm

Jake Davis and the Whiskey Stones, April 11th, 7-9:30pm

Carl Cacho Live Music, April 12th, 7-9:30pm

Matt Muisse Photography Exhibit, April 13th 4-6pm

Joe Hanley, April 18th, 7-9:30pm

Young United Musicians (YUM), April 19th, 7-9:30pm

PUPPIES: FROM PAGE 20

maimed, killed or threatened family pets for revenge or to psychologically control victims. 87% of these incidents occurred in the presence of the women, and 75% in the presence of the children, to psychologically control and coerce them.

There also are broader implications that affect children. Abusers often kill, harm, or threaten children’s pets to coerce them into sexual abuse or to force them to remain silent about abuse. Disturbed children kill or harm animals to emulate their parents’ conduct, to prevent the abuser from killing the pet, or to take out their aggressions on another victim.

Incredibly, there are active opponents to this sensible measure. HB 1410 merely expands protections against animal abuse in domestic violence situations. It facilitates the escape of a victim of domestic violence who might remain in a violent situation to protect their pet and provides judges with flexibility to ensure the safety of victims. No human rights are being given to animals. HB 1410 is not an animal rights piece of legislation.

Advocates and legislators work diligently to secure adequate protections for victims of domestic violence here in New Hampshire. Unfortunately, because of the insidious nature of abuse, it can be difficult to grasp the totality of far-reaching effects domestic violence has on a victim’s life. The State Senate now has the opportunity to take another step in the right direction by providing another tool for victims to break free from the cycle of violence and to keep themselves and their loved ones safe from abuse. House Bill 1410 is a natural progression of New Hampshire’s existing domestic violence and animal cruelty protections and the State Senate should pass it without hesitation.

D.J. Bettencourt served as a State Representative in the New Hampshire House of Representatives from 2005 to 2012 and was the House Majority Leader for the 2011-2012 legislative term. He currently works as the Director of Development and Community Relations at the Salem Animal Rescue League.

Salisbury Continues Telling \$80 Million Lie to Bankruptcy Court

Gracemarie, Joyce Tomaselli
VALLEY PATRIOT GUEST COLUMNISTS

How many new buyers, realtors, attorneys and judges know the legal meaning of “impose – levy – assess”? Read this, because when you don’t understand the difference, you could be tricked to believe that you owe(d) an assessment/ betterment bill that you did not owe. Our experience is that municipalities and courts misused the meaning of these words - finding a fact that an “assessment” was “imposed” in 1992, when the fact is that it was “imposed” in 1982. The Court’s finding of fact was wrong and not a fact at all!

Joyce filed Bankruptcy in February seeking to show that the Town’s claimed tax debt is egregiously in error as it was predicated upon a series of failures by the Town of Salisbury to follow the statutory requirements of Massachusetts General Law chapters 80 and 83. It was, in fact, the Town that sought to improperly charge a \$7.8 MILLION betterment assessment on March 16, 1992 for a sewer project that had been “voted/ordered” on May 17, 1982, completed in 1989 and 100%

funded by State and Federal grants. Accordingly, it is the Town of Salisbury that has sneakily, illegally taxed a portion of its residents and businesses in the beach area of Salisbury. Joyce is requesting a remedy and relief from being forced to pay illegal taxes that she is not responsible to pay. She wants to save her and her sister’s home (bought in 1991) and pay what is rightfully owed to the town. Joyce does not request taxpayers to grant relief from her municipal obligations. The town does not have a credible legal claim because the basis of the sewer betterment and sewer user assessments charged are illegal and excessive and these facts can be proven in Bankruptcy Court.

The problem is the Courts have all closed their eyes, so far, to the merits of the case. When a town does not do what it is required to do by statute, what can you do? Advice: pay attention to what is going on in your community, ask a lot of questions, request public records, research what you need to do to benefit your community, and when you vote – do the research first – understand the consequences of voting “yes or no”. Pay attention!



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The Town of Salisbury residents should follow what Billerica did – their First Amendment rights were being violated by a few of their selectmen. The residents have spoken out on how they feel and voted these selectmen out of office!

I believe it will take two election cycles to accomplish this in Salisbury. Vote for change in Selectmen to start to get our town back to its residents. I decided it would be best if I run for Selectman this May so I can help the residents by being open to their issues and allow them freedom of speech.

~Gil Medeiros, Salisbury, MA

Paid for by Bruce Arakelian



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Homocysteine - The Silent Killer that Framed Cholesterol and That Very Few Doctors Look At

Dr. Jin Sung
CHIROPRACTIC PHYSICIAN

PART 1

Today more than ever, there is a huge confusion as whether or not cholesterol is good or bad. If you or someone you know suffer from any of the symptoms or diseases listed below you need to read this article. It may be that high homocysteine is the main culprit to your problems and not cholesterol. Some of the symptoms/diseases high homocysteine can cause are:

- Atherosclerosis
- Heart disease
- Hypertension
- Brain fog
- Depression/Anxiety
- Fatigue
- Lingering autoimmunity (especially thyroid autoimmunity!)
- Migraines
- Erectile dysfunction/ Infertility
- Any neurodegenerative condition (especially Alzheimer's)

Cholesterol was framed.

We have a real crisis on our hands in America. Cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of death in the United States, affecting about 1 in 4 people. The American Heart association released a statement saying that this number is expected to rise from roughly 25% in 2010 to over 40% in 2030! This means that in 2030 almost one of every two people in the U.S. will have some form

of Heart disease! Not to mention that they also projected total direct medical cost of heart disease will triple from \$273 Billion in 2010 to \$818 Billion in 2030. What does this mean? It means that mainstream medical approach to treat heart disease is flawed, mostly because they are looking for the wrong marker in the blood – cholesterol.

Cholesterol does not cause heart disease.

When cholesterol was found to be a major component of arterial plaque, the “cholesterol theory of heart disease” was born, thinking that high cholesterol levels cause atherosclerosis. The truth, however, is not so simple. In fact cholesterol is a vital part of the body’s chemistry. Many of our bodies hormones, including sex hormones like progesterone, estrogens, testosterone (and many others!) come from cholesterol. Cholesterol is used in almost every cell membrane in the body to make it stronger and less permeable. Without cholesterol we cannot benefit from sunshine and can’t convert it to Vitamin D. Cholesterol is used to make bile salts, which helps us digest fats and helps us absorb our fat soluble vitamins. Cholesterol is even used as an anti-oxidant in our bodies!

Cholesterol-lowering drugs, such as statins, cause more than twenty different metabolic pathways that are vital for human life to come to a screeching halt.

Unfortunately, drug companies jumped the gun a little too quickly and invested millions in developing cholesterol-lowering drugs when this new “cholesterol theory of heart disease” was born. Now, even though modern science has disproved the “cholesterol theory of heart disease” these big drug companies have a great interest into keeping this “cholesterol theory” alive and well - and they are doing a great job at that! They have spent billions of dollars into making the general public believe that lowering your cholesterol will make you healthy. If this was the case, America’s heart disease problems as well as neuro-degenerative problems would have stopped with the discovery of statins in the mid to late 1970’s.

“ By 2030, 40.5% of the US population is projected to have some form of Car-diovascular Disease. Cardiovascular disease and costs are projected to in-crease substantially”– The American Heart Association

The French have the highest cholesterol in Europe, averaging around 250. Ironically enough, they have the lowest incidence of heart disease and they only have half the amount of heart attacks as we do here in the States. European diet also differs greatly from the standard American diet. With a diet high in fish and healthy oils, Europeans have a diet that is closer to the ideal 1:1 Omega-3 (very anti-inflammatory) fat to Omega-6 (very inflammatory) fat ratio. The standard American’s Omega-3 to Omega-6 ratio ranges anywhere from 1:20 to 1:50. We are a very inflamed nation!

Cholesterol doesn’t cause heart disease. Inflammation causes heart disease.

We test for a lot of inflammatory markers here at our clinic, but one of the main ones we look at is homocysteine levels. The thing to know about inflammation is that whenever you have immune system activation, you have inflammation. You cannot have one without the other. Our immune system’s job is to clear out things that don’t belong in our body – It is usually activated by two different things: Pathogens (like viruses and bacteria)

and tissue destruction. Homocysteine is like taking a brillo pad to the inner lining of your arteries. This leaves a massive trail of tissue destruction. And with tissue destruction comes immune system activation to clean up the damage, and as you learned before with immune system activation comes inflammation.

Chronic inflammation is found to be one of, if not THE main factor to virtually all of our chronic diseases we suffer with in America.

Think of homocysteine as like a sharp piece of glass flying around your blood stream. When homocysteine tears up the inner lining of our arterial walls, it makes them narrow and inelastic. Our body then tries to patch it up with cholesterol. Cholesterol is our bodies part of the healing mechanism. This is the same cholesterol they find in people with heart disease, however, the cholesterol would have never stuck to the artery in the first place if homocysteine wasn’t there to damage it. Newer research is suggesting that raised homocysteine levels alone are an independent risk factor for: hardening of the arteries, coronary heart disease, stroke, peripheral vascular disease, abnormal blood clotting, depression/anxiety, osteoporosis, Alzheimer’s, multiple sclerosis, rheumatoid arthritis, spontaneous abortion, placental abruption, neural tube defects, renal failure and type II diabetes.

Look for PART 2 of this article in next months addition.



Dr. Jin Sung is a chiropractor and the owner of Functional Chiropractic, Inc. He manages chronic patients both neurologically and metabolically to achieve the best outcome. He can

be reached at 978 688-6999. Or visit his website at www.DrJinSung.com
I would like thank my friend and mentor Dr. Ed Beyer for the content of this article.



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Another One Bites the Dust ... Breaking News From the World of Infectious Diseases

Francis P MacMillan, Jr, MD, FACG
VALLEY PATRIOT MEDICAL COLUMNIST

"Another one bites the dust" was a catchy tune in the 80's popularized by the British band Queen, whose band leader Freddie Mercury ultimately succumbed to complications of AIDS, caused by the HIV virus. Basic research, clinical research and drug development in the mid 1990s turned an infectious disease from a certain death sentence, to a treatable chronic condition where people live largely normal lives for many years to decades. While HIV is not yet cured, it has been controlled with remarkable speed; I think we can score that one a win.

The title of the song resonated with me when I considered where we are in 2014 with another serious infectious disease, viral hepatitis C. This time, the virus and not the victim, is on the ropes. Not so many years ago, a diagnosis of hepatitis C meant a slow deterioration of liver function, liver failure, liver cancer, transplantation or death. While some may carry the hepatitis C virus without symptoms, over many years it can damage the liver, leading to agonizing deterioration in health and quality of life.

This will be the year that we make history, and on the near horizon, hepatitis C will soon become history. For a disease we only discovered in 1989, and after less than three decades, \$4 billion in basic research and \$40 billion invested in clinical research and drug development, we now have two recent entries into the treatment of hepatitis C that are game changers, sofosbuvir and simeprevir. Several more new drugs are expected later this year. It is estimated that there are 4 to 5 million Americans with hepatitis C infection and most do not know that they are infected. Very few people actually get sick when infected; mild flu-like symptoms are not uncommon, resolving within a few weeks at most. When these mild and non-specific symptoms subside, they often don't remember even being sick.

If you were born between 1945 and 1965, the US Preventative Services Task Force and the Centers for Disease Control recommend universal screening of this

age cohort for hepatitis C infection. A simple and inexpensive blood test, ordered by your doctor, can tell you if you have been exposed to hepatitis C virus. Until a year or so ago, we used targeted screening based on risk factors. This behavior targeted strategy proved to be poor at identifying most people who may carry the virus, as most people do not recall an exposure event, many people with hepatitis C do not feel sick, and many do not have abnormal liver chemistry tests on blood testing. If your birthday falls between 1945 and 1965, you should ask your doctor to include a hepatitis C test with your cholesterol and other routine blood tests. The results could be life-changing.

In the United States, hepatitis C is the leading cause of liver failure, liver transplantation and liver disease related death. That is about to change, and the change is beginning this year, and right now. Your neighbors, friends and family will all benefit. New FDA approved therapies are now available that will cure almost all patients, often with a short 12 week course of oral pill based medications that are well tolerated and that have a low incidence of side effects. What a game changer from previous treatment which was often more intolerable than cancer chemotherapy!

So, what I am saying is that this is the beginning of the end of hepatitis C in the United States. There are 5 million of us infected who need to be identified and treated, and treatment has never been easier or more effective; 12 weeks to cure was unimaginable as recently as 18 months ago. Just get tested.

Another one bites the dust, indeed!

Frank MacMillan, Jr, MD, FACG

Dr. MacMillan specializes in Gastroenterology and Liver diseases, is a Fellow of the American College of Gastroenterology and its Massachusetts Governor. He is Vice President of the Massachusetts Gastroenterology Association. Dr. MacMillan is a native of North Andover and practices Gastroenterology in Haverhill at Merrimack Valley Hospital, where he currently serves as the Chief of Medicine. He has also been a member of the North Andover Board of Health since 2007.



Bullying in the Work Place

Attorney Timothy F. Stark, Esq.
VALLEY PATRIOT GUEST COLUMNIST

Clients often come in to my office to talk about a boss who uses intimidation, anger, or other aggressive behavior to manage their employees. They usually begin by explaining how stressful and unpleasant the working environment is, and they describe egregious conduct by the boss that makes it virtually impossible for them to perform their jobs. They state that, not only is it difficult to go into work, but even when they are away from the job they can't live a "normal" life since they are unable to sleep at night or think about anything other than the job and how horrible it is. Sometimes the problem is complicated by the fact that the family needs the income, and the person is therefore unable to quit. This type of boss presents significant problems for the worker, but shockingly may not be engaging in unlawful conduct.

The employee often believes that the boss is harassing them, and is often surprised to learn that this type of harassment is probably not against the law. In these cases, I often have the unpleasant task of informing the client that "bullying" in the workplace, at least at the present time, is not unlawful in Massachusetts. What makes "harassment" unlawful is the fact that the harassment being complained about is motivated by an "unlawful animus." This essentially means that the animosity is being directed toward the person because of their race, color, creed, national origin, sexual preference, gender,



or some other "protected class" under Mass General Law 151B. If the conduct is simply because the boss doesn't like the employee, or because that is the boss's chosen management style, then it probably does not constitute unlawful conduct. Clients often can't believe that a boss can actually use profanity or embarrass an employee, and not have it be unlawful.

From time to time, the Massachusetts State Legislature has proposed anti-bullying legislation. However, at least up until now, it has never even come close to passing. Bullying is certainly getting much more media attention these days (especially in school situations), but at least as of now, the issue is not being addressed within the workplace. Nonetheless, the victim of the harassment is not completely without remedies.

The initial option is to attempt to have a constructive conversation directly with the boss. Of course, it is extremely important that the employee remain professional and calm during this conversation. But, of course, such a conversation is not without

STARK: PAGE: 30



Home Health VNA Maternal Child Health Nurses Receive Chemotherapy and Biotherapy Certification

Home Health VNA announced today that seven registered nurses in the Maternal and Child Health (MCH) program have received certification in Pediatric Chemotherapy and Biotherapy administered by the Association of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology Nurses. Only a fraction, less than 1%, of the approximately 2.9 million nurses in the United States have completed this certification. Having a team of nurses with this advanced specialty will ensure that children and adolescents with cancer can receive chemotherapy and biotherapy in their own home, reducing the need for time consuming, disruptive and costly trips to the hospital for cancer treatment.

"With this advanced certification our nurses embrace the concept of family-centered care" said John G. Albert, MBA, FACHE, President and CEO of Home Health VNA. "It will ensure that incredible care is provided to some of our most vulnerable patients in the comfort and security of their own home."

Home Health VNA has one of the largest MCH programs in the state with a team of highly skilled registered nurses who provide complex medical care and support to children aged newborn to 18 in more than 90 cities and town in the Merrimack Valley, Northeastern Massachusetts and Southern NH. The team is expert in the care of children and families with complex medical care needs and regularly receives referrals to provide advanced oncology services in the home from The Jimmy Fund Clinic of Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, Boston Children's Hospital, Tufts Medical Center, Mass General Hospital and Dartmouth Hitchcock Hospital.

Home Health VNA, the leader in home health care, is a not-for-profit agency affiliated with HomeCare, Inc. and Merrimack Valley Hospice. For more information on the MCH program and other comprehensive programs and services, visit their website www.HomeHealthVNA.org or call 800-933-5593



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The True Government in MA

Dr. Bharani Padmanabhan
VALLEY PATRIOT OPINION COLUMNIST

We know about the Washington bubble. Inside the bubble, party affiliations and personal views do not matter, the members protect each other from the world outside the bubble. This Commonwealth's bubble is no different. When one member of the bubble is stung by a real push for accountability, it is felt by all and support arrives, like David Linsky rushed to protect Polanowicz, from Jim Lyons' + Marc Lombardo's push for accountability, till after Justina Pelletier is dead.

For Harvard + it's captured Commonwealth, the sting is a successful fight back by anguished parents Linda + Lou Pelletier, who protested the corrupt nexus between the fascist nut-cases controlling Harvard's psych-unit, EOHHS and the despicable Judge Johnston who together, jealous of a family that lovingly cares for their 93 y.o. grandma at home, have harmed young Justina for 14 months.

The parents protested after their child was stolen in a Friday-evening Blitzkrieg by Harvard's captured DCF. The actions of Dr Alice Newton - Harvard's own Eileen Treacy - were terrifyingly fascist and un-American. The Pelletiers called it as such, which is Protected Speech except in Massachusetts.

Despite unconstitutional deference to a Harvard Hospital the despicable Judge was forced to rescind his gag order. The parents then shared their anguish with America's families. This enraged the despicable Judge who retaliated against them for the effrontery of publicly protesting blatant violations of their human rights. The un-American despicable Judge stole their child and gifted her to the Government. The ACLU trembled silently in a corner.

This being Massachusetts we have heard this before. Judge MacLeod-Man-cuso condemned the Progressive City of Cambridge in a stinging decision (Monteiro) for it's "deliberate, systematic campaign to punish the plaintiff as a reprisal for her effrontery in lodging a discrimination claim."

People within the bubble corruptly use massive Governmental power to crush you, steal your child then blame you publicly for the effrontery of complaining.

Barry Pollack wrote to DPH Commissioner Bartlett about Children's and the "odd relationship they have established with DCF." Odd = Corrupt. Bartlett proved corruption when she gave 3 Marijuana licenses to Bill Delahunt whom the bubble saved in the Amy Bishop case (4 murders, 0 MA prosecution).

There is a legal case involving another Delahunt, Robert, who allowed his client to lose her Dentistry license before even a trial over the trivial facts. Losing one's license must be only for something ter-

ribly serious, not for something trivial and not without a robust defense. The client, Dr Helaine Smith, swears she was coerced into giving up her license because Delahunt said the all-powerful Government must be obeyed even when the action is clearly corrupt. Shut up or else!

Martha Coakley personally coerced Cheryl Amirault in the fraudulent Amirault case. For Coakley that was more important than prosecuting for Statutory Rape that very guilty member of the bubble, Jared Remy, for raping 15-year old Tiffany Guyette. There is ZERO legal justification for Coakley. As Middlesex DA, Coakley had enormous power and 20 chances to send Remy to prison as a Rapist. It proves Coakley is LYING when she claims she cares about violence against women.

If Coakley had cared to show up in person and argue forcefully for prison time even once, no Judge would have shown the usual deference to the bubble!

Unlike Coakley, Linsky and their soul-mate, the despicable Judge Johnston, Alan Dershowitz loves the US Constitution and declared that this despicable Judge's rulings on Justina were 100% unconstitutional, 100% un-American.

<http://liftingtheveil.blog.com/2014/03/31/alan-dershowitz-offers-help-with-justina-pelletier-case/>

DCF has offered to pay the Children's Hospital bill - \$660,000!! - as MassHealth refused to pay for a BOGUS 11-mo. inpatient kidnapping. Who will get a kickback from Children's for gutting the Treasury? Polanowicz? Linsky? The Legislature is OBLIGATED to ensure Children's does not get even one public dime. Dr Alice Newton should pay the bill. You break it you buy it.

Governmental power here is exclusively for the bubble. When Justina's father called Boston Police to save his 14 y.o. child from Harvard's un-American psychiatrists, the Police said 'Gee, if Harvard says the child will be better off without her parents surely it must be correct!'

Exactly like Milwaukee Police returning that other 14 y.o. child to Jeffrey Dahmer who then ate him that night, an event seared into our collective memory like Kitty Genovese. Boston's Homicide solve rate is stuck at 35% unlike NYC, Philadelphia and Houston Police who all solve 70% of their Homicides every year. The inescapable conclusion is that this 35% difference involves Homicides by the bubble, whom the Police are not allowed to touch.

Deference to criminals within the bubble, be it Bishop, Remy or a Harvard Hospital, defines the Government of Massachusetts.

Bharani Padmanabhan MD PhD is a neurologist who specialises in multiple sclerosis in the Boston area. scleroplex@gmail.com



Bill to Immediately Free Justina Pelletier from State Custody Filed in Mass. Legislature

The goal: Get Justina home by Easter! Everyone's help is needed!

Lonnie Brennan
VALLEY PATRIOT OPINION COLUMNIST

The story is shocking, and brings horrors to any parent who hears it: a 14-year old girl for years under the care of Tufts Medical Center for congenital issues gets sent for a referral to one of her former doctors, now working at Boston's Childrens Hospital. But, upon admittance at the hospital, the family is informed that Tufts is wrong in their diagnosis, it's all in the girl's mind. Then, the nightmare begins.

Within hours, the girl is locked up in psych ward. Denied medical care. The Mass. Department of Children and Families (google that, they have a horrific history caring for children) gets called by Children's Hospital, the parents try to get their daughter discharged back to the care of world-renowned Tufts Medical center, but instead, the STATE TAKES CONTROL OF THE CHILD. Makes her a "ward" of the state, and strips all parents rights. And that's just the beginning.

Now, before you get started, 14 months have gone by. The parents have never been charged with anything except getting pissed at the "Nazis" who stole their daughter and denied her treatment, and tortured her with strange 'therapies.'

Dr. Phil has had the family on his show. Mike Huckabee has had the father on his show the past two weeks. Several Facebook pages have been created, and www.FreeJustina.com has emerged to help the family. Even Alan Dershowitz, the ultra-liberal renowned headliner lawyer and teacher has appeared on the conservative Mike Huckabee show criticizing D.C.F. and saying they have NO legal rights to the child, and offering his assistance to the family. Alan Dershowitz! Tremendous!

Her name is Justina Pelletier. She's now 15 years old. When was the last time she got to hang out with her friends? Well, she can't. She's been locked up for 14 months because the state thinks that her stomach pains are in her head.

When was the last time she went to the movies, or got a pizza, or chatted on the phone with her friends for what seemed liked hours?

She can't. She's been locked up for 14 months because the state thinks that her stomach pains were in her head.

Her parents get to see her for just one hour each week, and when they go to see her, they have armed guards, men with guns, with them, out of fear the parents might try to steal the child back.

When will this girl have her first dance? When will she go back to school? It's been 14 months (Easter, Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Years...in a locked-down ward).

For 12 of those months, the parents abided by an apparently D.C.F.-controlled judge's 'gag' order, risking jail for themselves if they spoke up and told the press. They tried every avenue, hitting dead ends and indifference and apathy at every turn.

But, that gag-order judge, Joseph Johnston, made a big mistake: he failed to account for one simple fact that parents will gladly go to jail to protect their children. As Justina's condition deteriorated, and the family exhausted all resources to help their failing daughter, Justina's dad Lou Pelletier spoke out, and has been speaking out. He is extremely intelligent and dedicated to his family. He's ignited a firestorm, and we need to help him.

During the first week of April, I played a very small role: I wrote, I called, I tried what I could, then I worked with folks and worked with my representative, a good guy, an excellent guy, Lenny Mirra, to get a simple bill submitted to the legislature to bring this issue to closure.

MassResistance has been the premier voice for family rights in our state and throughout our country on many issues. They seek balance for all sides, not just the loudest, the most politically correct, or the powerful. They fight for the underdog. And they never back down. They are at the forefront of helping Justina and her family. Please visit MassResistance.org. This bill, their bill, is filed and it calls for the immediate release of Justina to her parents so she can get required care: a second opinion from Tufts, for example.

The MassResistance bill, HD4212 is now before our state representatives. Please visit their site or VoteCoreValues.org and urge your representative to sign onto the bill, or explain why they will not release this child who has done nothing wrong and is a danger to no one. Please. Do this now. Give this child a chance.

STARK: FROM 29

some risk and realistically not likely to be successful if the boss is truly a bully. A second option is to go to personnel and have a conversation about the situation, or to file a formal complaint. It is important, however, that the employee stay professional and constructive. In the alternative, the employee can also attempt to have a conversation with the boss's boss. At this point I strongly encourage the employee to keep an accurate record of what the boss is doing, and also record the employee's efforts to resolve the problem. These records may become very important later should the employee decide that they can no longer work in the environment and resign.

In some circumstances, even if the

employee quits, they may still be eligible to collect unemployment. However, they will need to prove that they did everything a reasonable person would have done to solve the problem prior to quitting. Also the person might be able to file a worker's compensation claim for work related stress, or a disability claim should the stress become completely disabling. Both of these latter options are difficult to sustain, but under some circumstances are successful.

If you or someone you know is working under these difficult circumstances, it is recommended that you discuss your options with a qualified and experienced employment attorney prior to taking any definitive actions.

ZYSK: FROM PAGE 20

Massachusetts animal cruelty laws - Chapter 272 section 77

<https://malegislature.gov>
Please follow on facebook at www.facebook.com/pages/Animal-Cruelty-Prevention-Month-APRIL/522504737795416

Tracey Zysk, owner of Wiggles & Jiggles Pet Care in North Andover MA is a local pet care professional. She has been featured on local radio, tv and newspapers educating the general public on animal care and animal health &



Pet Care.

wellness. Tracey is a proud supporter of Police, Fire & Military K9 units. Tracey may be reached at wigglewalk@comcast.net. Become a fan on facebook at Wiggles & Jiggles

TEEN TALK WITH ANA DEBERNARDO

The Mindlessness of Tweeting Every Thought

In a world seemingly run by social media and the internet, it's often a good idea to pause for a minute and really look at the things that occupy so much of our time. It seems like everyone is always busy doing something new on their electronic devices; whether it be their phones, iPads, computers, maybe even all of these and more. Among the things keeping the world glued to their screens, and one of the most popular, is Twitter.

The essence of Twitter is pretty much the same as any other of your typical social media sites. Its users "tweet" bursts of often useless information, emotions, or basically just about anything they feel like saying in 140 characters or less.

It can also serve very positive purposes, as it provides an easy way for people to be in contact with their favorite celebrities, allows them to peer into changes in their friends' lives, and even keeps them updated on the news of the day. For the most part however, people tend to abuse these possibilities and instead, do nothing more than become nuisances to their followers, as they fabricate tweets so pointless and nonsensical that reading them makes for a genuinely amusing pastime.

These are just a handful of "interesting" tweets that have appeared in my newsfeed:

The amusing:
"I wake up with a good attitude every day. Then idiots happen."

Brilliant observation that it is OTHERS, not we, who are responsible for our bad days.

"Strange but true: Red Sox-Yankees spring training game has been delayed due to a swarm of bees in the outfield."

The only thing more ridiculous than men being paid millions of dollars to play games? Men not playing said games due to presence of bees in the field.

"Apps this good whose got time to make friends"

More importantly, who's got time to learn proper grammar?

"How many of y'all lil kids know a full rap song but don't know the story of the Virgin Mary and Jesus in a mainjer?"

I don't know the story of the Virgin

Mary either, come to think of it.
"What do you call the houses little Irish people live in? Lepre-condos #jokes_my_mom_tells' #if_these_are_the_jokes_your_mom_tells_keep_them_between_you_and_your_mom"

Cyber burnnn.
"This beautiful Earth is now 2014 years old."

No comment.
The poetical:
"u r pushing my buttons like an elevator pls step off"

That was the deepest tweet...I've ever read. *wipes tear from eye*

"this project will probably kill me"
CALL THE COPS. HOMICIDAL PROJECT.

"all I do is eat, sleep and complain about life"

Among this person's other tweets are paragraphs and paragraphs of complaints on how boring and miserable their life is. Hmmm...coincidence?

The thought-provoking:
"So, what're all of us fortunate people complaining about today?"

"I want to create something so good that everyone hates it a week later."

"When taking a photo of your mirror for the internet, angle the camera a bit or you'll end up in the photo. I see this mistake a lot."

Betty White diss on "mirror selfies"
"Getting no retweets or favorites and thinking, 'was it really that bad?'"

I don't think being brought up by feeling worth from retweets is a good sign for our upcoming generation.

"I cannot wait until the day in history when those who supported pro-choice are looked at the way we now look at those who supported slavery."

Really makes you realize that the two are not that different.

"teachers like force us to learn and then ask us why we like hate school. like they teach us to hate learning. do they not realize?"

like. I guess not.

You can email Ana at: pm.de@verizon.net or Attention: ANA to valleypatriot@aol.com

Who is Responsible for Saving the Constitution?

Tom Weaver
VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

How many people know the opening words of the Constitution, the greatest document ever written designed to protect the life, liberty and pursuit of happiness for its citizens of these United States?

Once, the Constitution was an anchor that limited government. But we have moved from the Rule of Law, to a country based on the whim of men. We once studied civics and the meaning of the words, to redefining words to meet our needs. Do you remember the opening words of the Constitution?

Now, instead of the Constitution anchoring our republican government in law, our judges interpret the document as if it were living and breathing. Our elected Congress has given up maintaining its role and protecting liberty. Our President and his supporters demand that we judge him on the color of his skin, and not his high crimes and misdemeanors. Meanwhile, the bureaucracy grows, creating a federal jobs program creating new regulations, new restrictions, and new fees – all designed to keep them employed while stripping the citizen of their basic God given rights and freedoms. Do you know those opening words?

We have a dysfunctional government who demands to control millions of lives. We have a government that has forgotten why it was created. The picture is not very bright. Perhaps our best days have passed. Maybe the light of freedom is being extinguished, never to shine again in our lifetime or that of our great-grandchildren. What are those opening words?

Many in government are saying that we need to ignore the rules to fix the problem; it was once said by a President with regard to the free market. It did not work. Can the republic be saved by doing whatever we want? Seriously, just because the President ignores the law and Congress fails to legislate just law and the judges create living laws while the bureaucracy crushes freedom by implementing laws of whim – must we revert to anarchy to restore the Constitution? What are those words?

We have now entered the next Presidential race. And some great candidates want to ignore the Constitution in order to save the Constitution. They ignore the term natural borne citizen, meaning that both parents need to be citizens at the time of your birth.

The fact that our President fails to meet the requirements to be President, does not establish precedence? Is it up to them to restore the Constitution? Do you remember those words?

We stand at yet another crossroad in history – will the Constitution be restored? And who do we ask to restore it? Do you remember that opening paragraph?

"WE THE PEOPLE of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America."

Tom Weaver
The Classical Liberal
WCAP 980 AM Saturday Noon to 1 PM

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Bill’s TV Talk Mailbag

Bill Cushing
VALLEY PATRIOT TV COLUMNIST



From time to time my column will feature questions asked by readers regarding the world of TV. Feel free to email me with any questions you may have about TV at BillsTVTalk@gmail.

com, and I’ll do my best to answer you and may feature your question in a future column. Here’s what we got!

Hey Bill, I’m a huge fan of American Horror Story; can you give me any scoop on Season 4? – Sandy from Amesbury

I can tell you a few things about season 4, Sandy. For starters, it will be called, American Horror Story: Freak Show and will center around a carnival and the people involved, and it will be set in the 1950’s in Florida. The entire season 3 cast is set to return, and a new big name has been announced as a cast member for season 4. Who is that big name? It’s none other than Michael Chiklis, who will be joining the cast as the ex-husband and father of characters played, respectively, by Kathy Bates and Evan Peters.

I really enjoyed Orange Is The New Black’s first season. Any idea when we can expect Season 2? – Christina from Lowell

Season 2 will premiere on Netflix on June 6th, and from what I’m hearing you can expect the show to focus a little bit less on Piper and a little bit more on everyone else this season. Also, contrary to other rumors out there, Laura Prepon’s character of Alex will be appearing in most of this season’s episodes.

Big fan of Mad Men, so I’m feeling a little bittersweet. I’m excited for the show to return, but feeling bad that this will be the final season. What can you tell me about the upcoming final episodes? – Mike from Methuen

Don’t worry Mike. Even though this is Mad Men’s final season, the season is being split into 2 parts. The first 7 will air

beginning April 13th, and the rest will air about a year later in the spring of 2015. So you will still have the show around for a bit. I can tell you that you will see a West Coast branch of Sterling Cooper opening in season 7, and creator Matthew Weiner said that something that happened in the past is likely to “cast a shadow” over the final season. Wiener said “... as writers we don’t just throw stuff away once it’s happened. There is a shadow being cast over this whole season that started not just last season, but the first time we met Don Draper.”

Please give me some scoop on Parenthood. I love that show! – Karen from Andover

It appears as though the show isn’t done with the Amber and Ryan story just yet. Expect to see Ryan return for the season’s final 2 episodes. Executive Producer Jason Katims said that when Ryan sees Amber again “it’s over very, very dramatic circumstances and incorporates some of our other characters in a rich story... I’m not going to say anything more than that, other than get your Kleenex ready.”

Whatever scoop you can give me about my favorite show, Ray Donovan, would be appreciated. Thanks. – Richard from Salem, NH.

The show will have 2 new additions when it returns. Hank Azaria will be joining the cast as James Cochran, head of the LA division of the FBI, and Hollywood legend Ann Margaret will be coming onboard as June Wilson, who is described as “a major star back in her day who has a history with Ray’s boss Ezra.” Ray Donovan returns to Showtime on July 13th at 9 pm.

Do you have any questions about TV? Email me at BillsTVTalk@gmail.com. I will answer all of your questions and will feature some of the questions I receive in a future column.

For daily TV news, follow Bill on Twitter @TVNewsandNotes and on Facebook at TVNewsandNotes

www.tvnewsandnotes.com

MIND OVER MATTER with JERRY VALLEY

How Hypnotherapy Can Improve Your Lifestyle

JERRY VALLEY
VALLEY PATRIOT HYPNOSIS COLUMNIST



I have been in the field of hypnosis for over 44 years and still going strong. I am committed to helping people. Therefore, I will teach you the art and science of Self-Hypnosis so that you may improve your life in any category that you wish to pursue.

Hypnosis has given me the opportunity to “Wear 2 hats”.....being a successful stage hypnotist and certified hypnotherapist as well. I have won the highest ranking, the Rexford L. North, for achieving excellence in hypnosis. This was awarded by the National Guild of Hypnotists (NGH), the largest educational and training organization in the world with chapters in over 43 countries. I am also on the board of directors and have authored over 100 articles for the NGH’s journal. I also hold a Masters degree in psychology from Norwich University in Montpelier, Vermont.

In 1999, I was featured on the TV program “20/20” and have authored my best-seller book, “Inside Secrets of Stage Hypnotism.” I have performed all over the world being the featured hypnotist on the QE2 and other cruise ships. I have performed over 10,000 shows.

On the clinical side, I have worked with thousands of clients ranging from smokers to weight loss, stress reduction, improve athletics, ADD/ADHD, passing exams and many more. My clinical practice is 92% successful.

Let’s discuss the art of hypnosis and self-hypnosis. The best analogy that I can describe is this: have you ever driven your car down the highway, by yourself, started to daydream and MISSED YOUR EXIT? That is called road hypnosis. Now, please note that while you were driving the car, you were at no time, unconscious or asleep. However, your conscious mind was pre-occupied with something such as: picking up someone, going to the store or whatever. The point is that while you’re conscious mind was somewhere else, your subconscious mind was driving the car by rote memory.

NOTE: When you are in the state of hypnotic relaxation, you will, at no time, be unconscious or asleep. Hypnosis is NOT sleep! It is a profound state of relaxation, like daydreaming, whereby your subconscious mind becomes open to receiving proper suggestions. That brings me to explaining the functions of the conscious mind vs. the subconscious mind.

The conscious mind functions only while you are awake and shuts down during sleep. It is analytical, critical and contains the will power. Everyone passes through the hypnoidal state as we fall asleep and upon awakening each day. These are the brain wave activities leading to sleep: Beta (Wide awake), Alpha (Relaxed state and start of hypnosis), Theta (The deepest hypnotic state also known as somnambulism) and Delta (Actual sleep-unconscious). The conscious

mind works only during the waking state and shuts down (Unconsciousness) during sleep. When people state that they have no will-power, what they actually mean is that the conscious mind is subservient to the subconscious mind.

The subconscious mind, which is at least 100 times more powerful, works 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. It NEVER shuts down. Actually, the subconscious controls everything you do. It is, however, very literal, stores information, feelings, emotions and reacts to stimuli. It also contains the memory bank, belief system, expectation, phobias (if any).

Whenever there is a conflict between the two minds, the subconscious always wins out.

The secret is to bypass the critical faculty of the conscious mind and access the subconscious

Here’s an example of a conflict: A smoker consciously wants to stop smoking but just cannot seem to accomplish that goal with pure will-power. That is because the subconscious believes that smoking is PLEASURABLE. Therefore, it will not allow the smoker to quit. What must be accomplished here is that the hypnotist must reach the subconscious mind through a series of relaxation and deepening procedures. Once the critical faculty is bypassed, the subconscious mind becomes open to accepting and following the suggestions, without question and without analyzing. Then the suggestions anchor into that mind level which manifests each suggestion automatically.

If you get just one major point with this article, remember this “WHEN YOU FEEL GOOD ABOUT YOURSELF, THEN YOU CAN DO ANYTHING YOU SET YOUR MIND TO.”

Please use a small card (3 x 5) or a business sized card. Write or print your goal in a very positive manner. Here are some examples:



“DAY BY DAY, IN EVERYWAY, I AM A HAPPY, CLEAN AND ENERGETIC NON-

JERRY VALLEY: PAGE 34



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Top Photo Civil War Re-enactors at the Lawrence Saint Patrick's Day Parade, Top right: Linda Campbell's Saint Patrick's Day Breakfast: Senator Kathleen O'Connor Ives (D-Newburyport), State Rep. Diana DiZoglio (D-Methuen), Linda Campbell (D-Methuen) State Rep. Paul Donato (D-Malden), Don Campbell (back) State Rep. Frank Moran (D-Lawrence) and State Rep. Marcos Devers (D-Lawrence). Middle photo: Members of the Lawrence Fire Department on hand at the funeral of Boston Fire Lieutenant Walsh. Bottom left photo: members of the North Andover Fire Department at Lt. Walsh's funeral to honor his service and sacrifice. Bottom right: State Rep Marcos Devers stops by the Coffee Cann on Merrimack Street to pick up his Valley Patriot. Left to right Frank Cann, Cara Cann, Justin Cann and State Rep. Marcos Devers. Try The Coffee Cann Drive Thru! on Merrimack Street in Lawrence at Sal's Riverwalk!



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JERRY VALLEY: FROM PAGE 32

SMOKER.”

“DAY BY DAY, IN EVERYWAY, I AM BECOMING THINNER, SHAPELIER AND MORE ATTRACTIVE.”

“DAY BY DAY, IN EVERYWAY, I AM MORE CALM, RELAXED, AND CONFIDENT.”

Use the same basic concept to adapt to your very own goal. Then, read the affirmation out loud 3 times before entering the hypnotic state.

By reading the card out loud, you will be using the senses of touch, sight and sound. Do this everyday for at least 21 consecutive days. After 21 days, use this procedure as needed.

Now, I will teach you Self-Hypnosis. You might want to read the entire procedure into a tape recorder since your eyelids will be closed early into the program. Therefore, you will simply listen and respond. No matter how deeply you go into hypnosis, you will be in complete control and able to emerge from that state at any time by simply opening your eyes. Then, you will be wide awake and fully alert.

At no time, will you be unconscious or asleep, but in a beautiful state of mental and physical relaxation. While in this enjoyable state, you might hear other sounds but nothing can distract you. Of course, you may respond to any other stimuli or emergency by simply opening your eyes and you will be totally awake and alert.

As I speak to you, please change the wording to the first person. In other words, when I say “ Relax your shoulders”, (for example), say to yourself (silently), “My shoulders are relaxing.” Each time, change the wording as if you were just speaking to yourself.

Please sit or lie down in a comfortable chair, a couch or a bed. Do not cross your arms or legs. Pick out a spot above eye level (if you are sitting) or on the ceiling, if you are lying down.

Take 3 deep breaths in through your nose and exhale through your mouth. As you exhale, imagine that your body feels as if you are a “Rag Doll.” Let your muscles SAG, let your body SAG. Capture a nice peaceful feeling. No, close your eyes and breathe normally.

There are basically 2 methods of relaxing to a very profound state of mind and body. We will employ both methods. First, imagine yourself in a beautiful, relaxing scene such as: A quiet lake scene, an ocean scene, the moon, the sun, the sky or any other passive scene that you can picture in your mind. This modality is based on the premise that “We become what we think about.” and that “We move towards our most dominant thought.”

Be sure to pick a passive (where you are just relaxing), enjoyable scene.

Now, that picture in your mind is now sending FEELINGS of relaxation through your body. Starting at the top of your head, simply imagine or pretend that you feel your scalp relaxing. It is quite alright to use the word “Pretend” because your subconscious mind does not know the difference between real or imagined. Visualize your forehead relaxing and that wonderful feeling of peace and tranquility is just melting down through your eyelids, your facial muscles, in through your lips, your mouth, your jaws your tongue and down through your throat.

Easily, relaxation oozes down through neck muscles, your shoulders and all the way down through your back muscles right down to the small of your back. You feel calm, relaxed, refreshed and peaceful. You are safe and secure and always in complete control.

Now, just let that nice feeling melt down through your upper arms, your forearms, your wrists, your hands and your fingertips.

Sometimes, you will experience certain sensations like TINGLING in your fingertips and toes. Your arms and legs will feel motionless....a nice feeling. Your eyes might tear a bit as the tear ducts sometimes open up. And, as you relax into deeper levels, which are desirable, you will feel extremely calm, relaxed and refreshed.

Continuing, the relaxation goes into your lungs and your breathing becomes easy, calm

and rhythmic. Nice easy breathing. Feel the relaxation melting down through your stomach muscles, your abdominal muscles and now through your hips, your thighs, your knees, your ankles, your feet and all the way down to your toes. You are profoundly relaxed and feeling so good.

If you wish to get to even deeper levels, so that everything actually seems real, Then, silently count, like this from 10 to 1.

10..... 9..... 8..... 7.....
6..... deeper54
.....32. 1

And on the next count all the way down into total relaxation and receptivity.....now on the count of.....1.

At this time, you need to picture yourself exactly as you wish to be (A non-smoker..... thinner.....more calm and relaxed etc). Keep yourself in the present time and make the past unimportant. You now have the power to make any unpleasant memories from the past UNIMPORTANT! You can also remember the pleasant events.....but do not live in the past.....STAY IN THE PRESENT TIME!

Remember, nothing can bother you without your consent.

Believe in yourself and take the attitude that you can do anything that you set your mind to.

In order to develop the RIGHT MENTAL ATTITUDE (The RMA), do the following as you fall asleep and upon awakening each day:

These are the things that will help you to feel good about yourself.

BE GRATEFUL AND HAPPY FOR:
Being alive
Being relatively healthy
Being loved
Loving others
Being who you are.....SPECIAL AND UNIQUE. There is nobody on earth exactly like you.....like a fingerprint.

Being able to get out of bed, walk, drive a car, go to a movie, etc.

GRATEFUL FOR LIFE ITSELF!

Now, as I count forward from 1 to 5, you will awaken and emerge from the hypnotic state and be wide awake and completely alert! (If you wish, you may just drift off to sleep instead of awakening). 1.....” I am coming up feeling wonderful.” 2.....”I feel calm, relaxed and refreshed.” 3. My mind is clear and alert.” 4. “As I take a nice deep breath, energy is surging through my body.” 5. “I am wide awake and fully alert.”

In conclusion, if you practice self-hypnosis everyday for at least 21 days and hopefully for the rest of your life, whatever you truly desire will come to you.

SEE IT IN YOUR MIND’S EYE....
BELIEVE IT IN YOUR HEART....IT WILL HAPPEN!

I can be reached at: jerryvalley007@aol.com
Jerry Valley, M.A.C.P.
978-688-6657

BABIES AND BRIEFCASES

LOCAL RESIDENT PROVIDES HOPE FOR HOMELESS CHILDREN

Cheryl Hajjar
VALLEY PATRIOT MOMMY COLUMNIST

As some of you know my company, Indigo Magic was a recent Merrimack Valley Sandbox Winter Accelerator winner in February. Here, 17 finalists gathered for 3 months in a grant program that helped us all accelerate our businesses. At the first class, I sat down next to Mickey Cockrell, the Executive Director of Catie’s Closet, a non-profit organization who provides in school closets filled with clothing and toiletries for homeless children. If you know Mickey, you know that she has a heart as big as the moon and the corporate retail background to move every mountain on the planet. Never have I ever been more inspired by the presence of another like I am with Mickey, which is why I am so proud to call her my colleague and friend.

Catie’s Closet has been a closet of hope for thousands of homeless students wanting to get an education, be like others and simply wanting to fit in. Imagine if your child didn’t have a winter coat, or had frostbitten toes because they had holes in the bottoms of their shoes when they walked to school?

As a family, Mickey and her sisters became aware of the plight of homeless students in a local newspaper article in 2009. Her niece Catie, was a recent graduate of Lowell High and she confirmed that there were many kids who were struggling and they just wanted to fit in and feel like everyone else. Catie was passionate about education and wanted everyone to have the same chance regardless of circumstances. She had battled a life long illness and as a result endured 40 surgeries but never viewed it as an obstacle to achieving her dreams. Catie was pursuing a degree in education when she passed away in March of 2010. As a tribute to Catie and to carry on her mission, Mickey’s family wanted to help students in a big way.

Catie’s Closet was started as a single location in May 2010 at Lowell High School. Mickey had seriously thought it would just be a family project so they worked collecting clothing in their parent’s basement to stock the closet. When word got out, many schools started calling them to open up a closet in their school. They became a 501c3 in May 2011 and began opening more schools. In under 3 years, they are now painfully

aware of how big of need is and always have a waiting list of schools needing a Catie’s Closet. They would like to continue to meet those needs as fast as possible.

It is hard to believe but the Massachusetts statistics don’t lie. Currently, there are 49,000 homeless students registered in Massachusetts Public Schools. In the U.S. there are over 1.1 million homeless children with the average age being just 8 years old. Children living in poverty adds another 15 million in the U.S. and 213,000 in Massachusetts.

Mickey’s prior work experience has enabled the non-profit to be able to handle the workload that opening closets, running their distribution center and taking inventory demands. She has over 30 years in the retail industry, most recently as a Vice President DM for Kohl’s. She is a leader in buying, marketing, store operations, logistics, human resources and new store processes. Here experience has prepared her to grow Catie’s Closet to the next level.

Currently, Catie’s Closets are operating in 20 schools with 16 in Lowell and 4 in New Hampshire. When a school requests a closet, the organization works with the school administration to find the best location within the school. They need a minimum of 150 sq ft in an elementary school and 200 sq ft in a high school. A team of people build out the closets and they stock it with items that come directly from the distribution center, which is located in Dracut at 19 School St. They accept boys and girls clothing in Youth sizes 4-20, teen girls sizes 0-17 and Boys Sizes 20-42 as well as corresponding XS to XXL size tops. Following health guidelines, they only accept new socks, underwear and full size toiletries. It costs \$4,450 to construct and open a closet. They look for sponsors to help them open each one. Their short-term goals are to meet the needs statewide and then work on a strategy for a nationwide rollout.

How can you as a community or individual get involved? Catie’s Closet loves drives! Drives are usually hosted by schools, churches, universities, even families. If you think your community schools need to open a closet, host a drive or you just want to learn how you can get involved, please email Mickey at: info@catiescloset.org or go to www.catiescloset.org/donate

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American Legion Spring Update For Our Veterans

John Lenotte
VALLEY PATRIOT VETERAN COLUMNIST

March certainly has been a busy month and like most of you, I hope we have seen the last snow storm until next winter. First of all, I want to thank Tom Duggan and his staff at The Valley Patriot for putting together an outstanding 10th anniversary BASH and for recognizing me and The American Legion. It was an honor to lead everyone in saying the Pledge of Allegiance and to see Boston Commissioner of Veterans Services, Francisco Urena, be recognized and win The Valley Patriot, Hero Veteran's Award.

On March 18th, Congresswoman Niki Tsongas held a veterans committee meeting at Middlesex Community College in Lowell. I was in attendance representing The American Legion. The guest speaker was Massachusetts Secretary of Veterans' Services, Coleman Nee, and was attended by a number of veteran service offices and veterans advocates. We are fortunate that veterans' benefits given by the Commonwealth are the best in the country. Yet many veterans are not aware and do not take advantage of them. According to Secretary Nee, there are about 370 thousand veterans in Massachusetts with about 33 thousand being female veterans. Both the state and federal government have more to do in working with female veterans but progress is being made. A good state resource for veterans is [www.massvet-](http://www.massvet-sadviser.org)



[sadviser.org](http://www.massvet-sadviser.org).

I was able to spend a few days in Washington, D.C. for the annual American Legion Washington Conference. This was attended by a number of members from Massachusetts along with several hundred Legionnaires from across the country, and a few from foreign posts. We heard from Representative Jeff Miller, Chairman of the House Veterans Affairs Committee and from Senator Lindsey Graham, member of the Senate Armed Service Committee. Senator Graham had some interesting remarks including: "The American Legion is so important. It is the voice, it is the eyes and ears, and it is the soul of those who care about the military. Your role now is more important than any time in history because we live in a society where most people are disconnected from the requirements of service. The average American is not asked to do a whole lot in terms of defending the nation. That doesn't mean they don't care. They do."

Along with our fellow Legionnaires, Auxiliary and Sons of the American Legion, we went to visit the Congressional offices in both the House and the Senate. Most of the House members were able to spend some time with us depending on when their presence was needed for a vote on the House floor. They and their staff are very supportive. We went over a number of Legion priorities for this session of Congress



PHOTO: RON MUSHOW PHOTOGRAPHY

Lawrence Mayor Dan Rivera shakes hands with North Andover Veteran Tom Fallon after presenting him with The Valley Patriot Hero Veteran Award. Rivera presented Fallon and Boston Commissioner of Veterans Services Francisco Urena, The Valley Patriot's annual award for service to their country and helping veterans here at home. Pictured Left to Right: John Lenotte, Lawrence Mayor Dan Rivera, Francisco Urena, Tom Fallon, and Anthony Robito. Back Row Valley Patriot co-owner Ralph Wilbur, Chris Eldredge and PuppyGirl Kate Whitney

including: fully funding a superior national defense and protecting troops from cuts; ensuring the stability of VA funding; ending the VA claims backlog; ending veteran homelessness' providing quality education through the Post 9/11 GI bill and protecting the American Flag. More information can be found at www.legion.org/washington-conference.

And on Saturday, March 29, 2014, the Veterans Northeast Outreach Center in Haverhill, led by John Ratka, conducted a Vietnam Veterans Day program. It was well done just wish more could have been present. The center was just awarded over \$5 million to construct 27 additional housing unit for veterans. They are doing great work!

As noted before and I will continue to repeat, if you have concerns about any issues that Congress is dealing with, you should call or email their office. One site is www.contactingthecongress.org. If we do not give them our opinions then they think no one is interested. Also, let us not forget to vote in the November elections.

May God bless our troops and their families, along with our local fire/police/first responders.



John Lenotte, Commander, Wilbur M. Co-meau Post 4, , Haverhill MA; Past Commander, Department of Massachusetts, The American Legion; contact: JohnLDistrict8@verizon.net

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BUSINESS HOURS: MON-FRI: 9-5PM, SAT: 8-12PM
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